

# PURE ROCK

## NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER / SEPTEMBER 1986

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### MATT HURICH: newest STRYPER member replaces GAINES

When Tim Gaines left STRYPER recently, the band was left without a bass-guitarist. However, newcomer Matt Hurich has filled Tim's shoes. The whole band as well as Tim agreed he should exit. Gaines wants to start a band of his own with less "metal".

TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL, STRYPER'S new LP due next month, continues as planned. The tour comes to Boston December 1st.

### RELATED ARTICLE

#### New LP Has Big Sales Predicted

Sales of STRYPER'S new album, "TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL" are expected to possibly triple SOLDIERS UNDER COMMAND'S. If this happens, sales of the album will exceed 500,000. Other good news for the band: the latest billboard charts show that their newly remixed "THE YELLOW AND BLACK ATTACK", the first album they put out, has reached #103 out of 200.

### BLOODGOOD gets secular publicity

The band that has been following in STRYPER'S footsteps has been inclining in recognition. That should sell records.

Hopefully, the band can keep its head above the water, because just recently, it got a new drummer.

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here.]

PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER    SEPTEMBER 1986    PAGE TWO

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PETRA'S new vocalist:

John Schlitt is accepted

Most PETRA fans like John Schlitt's vocals on the band's new album, "BACK TO THE STREET", a survey proves.

Album sales for the new album have been far less than 1984's hit "BEAT THE SYSTEM", but sales are expected to climb soon.

DANIEL BAND soars to new highs

with, "RISE UP"

The five-month-old "RISE UP" has finally just started to make headlines. The album has just recently been put on Capitol Records and is working up to big sales status. Success seems to be lurking in the shadows for DANIEL BAND, who is from Canada.

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COMING NEXT MONTH

in PURE ROCK

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NEWLOOK!

# PURE ROCK

## NEWSLETTER

THE MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER OCTOBER, 1986 Vol. 1 No. 2

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### STRYKEN throws daring challenge at

#### Motely Crue and W.A.S.P.

Recently, the new thunder metal christian rock group STRYKEN sent out a letter to both Motely Crue and W.A.S.P.. They mean business. The daring letter was shocking. A portion of the Crue's letter stated:

'We adjure you in the name of Jesus, the Christ, to meet us face to face on national television...and be exposed.'

The band wants to appear with them on the Phil Donahue talk Show. They also claim to have mailed a copy of the letter to 'every metal magazine on the planet.'

The "Sons of Thunder" wants your help to destroy the forces of evil distorting the world of rock music and turning the youth of this world to satan. Support this incredible burden of the band. Pray for STRYKEN and their hopeful task of exposing satan's work today! /P.R./

### Boston's new STRYPER concert postponed

Boston has been waiting to scream, "To Hell With the devil!" impatiently as the yellow and black striped spandex-clad rockers have been getting ready to invade the city on their new concert tour. Unfortunately however, scheduling difficulties have pushed the date up to sometime in mid winter.

Even so, many fans are waiting for the new album to soar in the charts. The remixed version of "The Yellow and Black Attack" flew to the nineties in the Hot 200 Album Chart in Billboard magazine recently. "Soldiers Under Command" had an even better peak.

So, if you're a STRYPER fan, hang on until winter arrives. Sooner than you think it's gonna roll. Rock 'n' Roll! /P.R./

### BARREN CROSS 'Rocks For the King'

With first place lyrics and extreme instrumental talent, BARREN CROSS rocks you! Every song on their full-length album on Star Song Records are great. The Newsletter has recieved information that the band is waiting to release a second album that will blow the doors off of their present "Rock For the King." Their fans are wondering why the talented California based band are not making an effort to travel to the East Coast for concert touring. We agree! /P.R./

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88 High Street  
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PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER OCTOBER, 1986

Page Two

## FIRST STRIKE, MESSIAH PROPHET BAND's fans

### wait for new albums

Fans of FIRST STRIKE and MESSIAH PROPHET have been waiting for both of their new second LP's to be released. MESSIAH PROPHET's album has been continuously postponed for its release date, while FIRST STRIKE hasn't got together to make one.

Good news awaits you! F.S. plans on its new LP within a year, and M.P.B. in a few more months. Hang on! /P.R./

### SAINT hopes new LP scores big

The saints themselves have released their second album entitled "Times End". SAINT has just started a new contract with Pure Metal Records as of this album. The new full-length album has new sounds, and their same style of hard-hitting lyrics. Also: it is possible that the band has gotten a new guitarist, but we have not recieved enough info on it yet. /P.R./

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### IN THIS MONTHS ISSUE:

BARREN CROSS -- STRYKEN -- FIRST STRIKE -- STRYPER  
SAINT -- MESSIAH PROPHET BAND



# TRUE ROCK

## THE MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER

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FIRST STRIKE and MESSIAH PROPHET BAND's fans  
wait for new albums

Fans of FIRST STRIKE and MESSIAH PROPHET BAND have been waiting for both of their second albums to be released. MESSIAH PROPHET's album release date has been continuously postponed, while FIRST STRIKE hasn't got together to make one yet.

Good news awaits you, fans! STRIKE plans on its second LP within a year if everything goes well, and MESSIAH PROPHET's will be out in a few months. /P.R./

SAINT hopes new "Time's End" scores big

Speaking of second albums, the saints themselves have released their second album entitled "Time's End". As of this album, SAINT is starting a new recording contract with Pure Metal Records, a Refuge affiliate, who has a contract with DANIEL BAND. The new full-length LP has new sounds, and their same style of hard-hitting lyrics.

After "Warriors of the Son", SAINT's guitarist left. We have recieved information that he may be back. Next month's issue will have all the details. /P.R./

ATTENTION!

You are holding a reprinted version of October's issue. It had to be altered in order to be sufficient for printing and mailing. Regular issues contain more news. --THE PUBLISHER

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# PURE ROCK

## THE MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1986

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

### STRYPER's bassist: Tim Gaines returns

Confusing, isn't it? Back together once again, the number two best new band STRYPER rocks with the number five best bassist, according to Metal Edge magazine's top five metal charts.

The confusion over bass position had left us baffled until their new LP "To Hell With The Devil" was released. No credit is given to Matt Hurich, who was supposed to replace Gaines--who's exit left devoted fans crushed.

Some rumors claimed Gaines' reasons for leaving were among drug abuse, marriage problems and backsliding, to name a few. However, the truth was that he felt he wasn't spending enough time with his wife, financial problems were difficult, and he was considering playing another style of music, until the band convinced him to return for their second full-length album by offering to take care of his finances. /P.R.N./

### PURE ROCK REVIEW

### STRYPER rocks and rules on new full-length LP

On October 31st, "To Hell With The Devil" bombarded its way into New England record stores like a sudden flash from heaven. From the moment the needle hits the groove, STRYPER's brand-new LP on Enigma Records thrashes all-new sounds that will leave your head spinning for hours.

The title cut starts the album off with definite STRYPER: Michael Sweet's gut-wrenching vocals, unbear-

able guitar lashes from Oz Fox, mesmerizing drums from Robert Sweet, and returned bassist Tim Gaines, who adds the final touch.

This album will rock you off your seat. It increases in intensity the more you listen to it. STRYPER continues to give God the glory, and they sure do it well!

### STRYPER--To Hell With The Devil

\*\*\*\* (out of 4)

MATRYX changes name, releases new album

The metal garage band MATRYX, who had three studio junkie tape albums out but no recording contract, has changed its name to BRIDE. Their reason for the change is because 'there are too many bands already named MATRYX.' They want to avoid confusion.

BRIDE has recently negotiated a recording contract to make an album. It will be released on the label of Pure Metal, a division of Refuge Records, who also has contracts with DANIEL BAND and SAINT. BRIDE's new LP will hit record stores in the near future. /P.R.N./

SAINT's guitarist returns

SAINT's original guitarist, John Mahan, who left after "Warriors of the Son" to form his own band THRESHER, has returned. A major illness of one of the band members put it on hold indefinitely. When the remaining members of SAINT heard of this, they immediately asked him to do the new LP "Time's End" and possible touring. He agreed to do both.

SAINT feels their call to play metal came from the need of good metal bands in the Christian market and most importantly, the opportunity to reach young people for Christ. Great, guys!

There has been no talk about when or if the "Time's End" tour lands near Boston yet. /P.R.N./

PURE ROCK  
REVIEWSPHILADELPHIA: underrated metal?

Yes, a Christian metal band hasn't recieved the publicity it deserves. The band is PHILADELPHIA, a high-voltage quartet from Jackson, Mississippi. The band blasted the metal scene with their first LP entitled "Tell The Truth" on Patmos Records with blistering guitar licks and shattering vocals. It's stunning to find that PHILADELPHIA isn't as big as BARREN CROSS and other greats.

Recently, after a long year in the studio, the band came out with their second album "Search and Destroy" which proved that these guys can headbang with the rest, espe-

cially on songs like the title cut. This band is a Christian metal head's dream, and both albums should please your lyrical and guitar bashing needs. /P.R.N./

BLOODGOOD and MESSIAH PROPHET BAND may be coming soon to the Boston area. As of now, the very tentative date is December 5th at E.M. Leows. The reason for the uncertainty is because of the financial burden to get them out here. We will keep you informed. For more information and tickets, call Joe Vieira's Rocking Metal Concert Hotline in Westford, MA at 692-9083. Leave your name and telephone number. /P.R.N./

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COMING in March or April, PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER will be distributing a special multi-page limited edition issue on the STRYPER concert! The special issue will feature detail-packed concert highlights and photos. We may even be able to interview one of the band members! To order this memorable issue, just fill out the coupon below! You'll receive it less than two weeks after printing.

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Thanks for helping me out when I needed it most! Your kindness, patience, and understanding have really paid off! I'll always appreciate and respect you.

Love in Jesus,



PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER  
Dan Milette

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Headlines from --STRYPER-- plus --SAINT--  
--MATRYX-- and two Pure Rock Reviews!

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# PURE ROCK

## THE MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER, 1986

VOL.1 NO.4

### MESSIAH PROPHET member change; new album

If a band releases an album and is sold out everywhere in just three weeks, you know it's hot.

MESSIAH PROPHET, the band that's preparing for their upcoming Metal Thunder Tour, has done just that with their new album "Master of the Metal." The band's first effort, "Rock the Flock" on Morada Records hit stores in 1984. The new release had been continuously held up, but it has finally arrived.

The incredible new album is released on Pure Metal Records, which also has albums out for SAINT and THE BRIDE.

Not only is their new album in the news, some major member changes have taken place. Ray Fletcher, MESSIAH PROPHET's manager, gave me the details. He told me that bass guitarist Dean Pellman was replaced by Joe Shirk, and added was the new guitarist Brian Nicarri. --By D.M.

### Local band searches for vocalist

WITNESS, the band that formed north of Boston just last month after a breakup of their first group Irokk, is presently seeking a vocalist.

Bill Melanson, on drums, became a Christian almost a year ago, then introduced the bass guitarist Keith Marron, and Chris Addams, the lead guitarist, to Christ soon afterward.

Keith explained to me how WITNESS feels they've been called to be a fully devoted Christian band. Their calling came soon after the trio were born from above. They lost their vocalist because as Keith explained, '...he was pretty much against the idea [of going all-out Christian].'

The band is confident. 'We're praying a lot and we're getting the music down...we're all set, we just need a vocalist.' Bill agrees. 'God put [the band] together. It's His band.'

Are you a spirit-filled Christian metal vocalist looking for the same in a band? If you or somebody you know is, contact us today! --By D.M.

PURE ROCK  
REVIEWPROPHET: Pop metal at it's best

Just when STRYPER thought they were all alone in the new idea category, PROPHET rocks the Christian music world with their self-titled debut album on Total Experience Records. This band, with their long hair and spandex, has added something new to power drums and thrashing guitars.

Finally a band has injected some keyboards into a basically hard sound, adding--rather than taking away from the music. This is very noticeable on such quick, upbeat songs as "Street Secrets" and "Power Play." PROPHET also has a few slow guitar ballads that show the band's sensitive side. A talented band labeled as "pop metal," PROPHET is a must for your Christian metal collection. --By Lonnie Crampsey

CONCERT UPDATES

Look for a host of Heavenly Metal bands invading New England between the winter/spring months of February and April. The following is a list of the bands presently scheduled to make a visit. Three of the bands have never been to New England, so don't miss their premiere!

## THE METAL CONCERT SERIES

<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHERE SCHEDULED</u>	<u>WHO</u>
February 21st	Salem High School, Salem, MA	DANIEL BAND and THE BRIDE
March	E.M. Leows, Worcester, MA	STRYPER
March 28th	E.M. Leows, Worcester, MA	BARREN CROSS and SAINT
April 25th	E.M. Leows, Worcester, MA	BLOODGOOD and MESSIAH PROPHET*

For time and ticket information, call the Rock 'N' Metal Concert Hotline at (617)692-9083. Expect to pay from \$10-15 per ticket.

\*This concert was postponed from December 5, 1986.

**MONTHLY CONCERT UPDATES!** For even more concert info, a monthly publication will be available by January. The Concert Guide and Activities Calendar will include information on all Christian rock concerts in New England, ticket outlets, Christian roller-skating locations, coffee houses, and special events. Look for it in Christian bookstores. --By D.M.



STRYPERS' "To Hell With The Devil" is burning up the charts. On it's fifth week of release, the album hit #37 on Billboard's Hot 200 Albums chart. "Soldiers Under Command" landed at only 189th, but has been on the charts for 46 weeks. The remixed version of "The Yellow and Black Attack!," just missing the top hundred two weeks before, plunged to a 195 rank. Overall, STRYPER has been doing the best they ever have in the charts. Their headlining concert tour which started last month will land in New England the second week of March. --By D.M.

### NEW ALBUM INFO

Three metal bands will release new albums by spring. These same bands will play in New England just after the new albums are released.

THE BRIDE's "Show No Mercy" will be out anytime now, BARREN CROSS' new record will be out by March, and BLOODGOOD's second album will be available in February.

Also in the news: DANIEL BAND has just completed their "Walk On the Water" video in Canada recently. Hopefully, MTV will broadcast the video and help DANIEL BAND sell copies of their fifth and latest album "Rise Up" that was released last April by Refuge Records. --By D.M.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

MESSIAH PROPHET -- STRYPER -- WITNESS --  
Concert Updates -- New Album Information --

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# PURE ROCK

## THE MONTHLY CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 1987

VOL. 1 NO. 6

### BARREN CROSS prepares for upcoming battle

BY DAN MILETTE

A recent conversation with Steve Whitaker, drummer, founder, and manager of one of the original California-based Christian metal bands, BARREN CROSS, should answer some key questions that have been tantalizing the minds of many curious fans.

**PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER:** How and when did BARREN CROSS become a band?

**STEVE WHITAKER:** The band actually originated back in my senior year of High School when I had a desire to meet Christian friends. I played the drums and wanted to play more so, through an ad in a local newspaper, I got together with our guitarist Ray Parris. We started playing mellow music back then in 1981 when we were about 17 or 18 years old. Eventually we got into heavier music that we really enjoyed playing and God brought us together with vocalist-guitarist Mike Lee and bass guitarist Jim LaVerde after that. We put together *Rock For The King* in early 1986 and it's sold well over 30,000 copies. Since then, it's gone to several European countries.

**PRN:** In what way has secular publicity affected the band?

**SW:** It's been awesome, actually! I just did some other interviews for a few European magazines and they rated our album a 99. We've received a lot of publicity from that alone. The secular promotion and a new recording deal we've been working on with Enigma Records have been real exciting. Things have been very positive lately.

**PRN:** So how's work been on your new album?

**SW:** We've been working on the new songs, we've got about twelve right now, we're going to take the top ten and record those. We are tentatively calling the new album *The Battallic*--that's a word Mike made up when he wrote the song.



It means "the battle." It basically is about the battle between God and Satan. You've got a choice to go either way. Satan offers some real nice looking things but in the end he'll destroy you. Now if we do indeed use "The Battallic" as the title cut, the album cover will explain exactly what the song means. The left side shows Satan wrapping chains around a long-haired metal fan, and the right shows a glorified hand from Heaven reaching down to save him. We haven't confirmed the use of it though. So for now anyway, we're still rehearsing and getting the songs together. As soon as the negotiations with Enigma are finished, we'll start the recording--hopefully by the end of February for a possible release date in late April. Continued on page 4

### REZ rests up between albums

Where has the rock band REZ been lately? Last year was only the second time the band hasn't released an album every year since their **Awaiting Your Reply** debut in 1978. According to manager Henry Hwang, the band has been spending time with their families and working out new songs. The nine year-old band from Chicago has just completed their contract with Sparrow Records and wants to be signed on a big label for their newest release due this year.

When asked about how God has been to the band, Henry said, "I believe the Lord has used REZ in a very evangelistic way. We could never stop talking about the Lord."

The band's most recent straight-ahead rock 'n roll album **Between Heaven 'N Hell** has sold more copies than any of their previous albums.

The guitarist/vocalist Glenn Kaiser has been working on a solo praise album that "is not REZ music." The new album consists of songs that Glenn has written over the years. No release date or label have been placed.

Presently then, REZ is still writing material, looking for a new label, and have put together an all-new four-song demo. After a long absence from the music scene, the band's ninth album should get here late this year. By Dan Milette

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## Then and now.

*Amy Grant*



AMY GRANT began developing an interest in pop music as early as age fourteen when she started writing music. At fifteen, she was doing janitorial work in a Nashville recording studio when producer Brown Bannister heard a tape of Amy's material. He liked what he heard and played it over the phone to the head of Word Records, the nation's largest label for Contemporary Christian music. Amy soon found herself with a recording contract.

"I didn't grow up listening to church music," Amy stated. "I never sang in a choir."

Success came early for Amy. In fact, one of her albums, *Age To Age*, is the most successful album in the history of Contemporary Christian music, selling over one million copies. "I'm a Christian and I want to sing about it," Amy proudly says.

Her most recent full-length album *Unguarded* marked her first record to receive wide distribution, thanks to a deal that was made with A&M records. Amy says,

"It's the best record I've ever done. Long before I knew about the A&M deal, I knew that this would be my ninth album and I knew I wanted to take a more subtle approach. I want to communicate my life, my thoughts, and my Christianity creatively," she explains. "The Christian audience just wanted me to be honest and real. But you can only be straightforward and literal so many ways before you become redundant. My message is 'Look--I'm not going to throw it in your face. But if you're searching, this song will really say something to you.' I'm not saying 'Hey you've got to hear this.'"

Amy's goal is not to preach but to inspire, and that's the way she finds herself fitting into the music world. "I want my music to come across as vulnerable, reachable, hopeful and having a conscience. Most of all, I want my music to encourage someone to be a real person." **By Dan Milette**



PURE ROCK  
REVIEWSAINT prepares us for the end of time

After a long year since their **Warriors Of The Son** debut, SAINT decides to raid the market with **Time's End** on Pure Metal Records. This is easily the hardest and heaviest ground-shaking album to come out in recent months. For fans that were disappointed after the band's **Warriors Of The Son** was released, your eyes will open wide to this new effort from the heaviest powerhouse in Christian metal--this four-man storm out of Salem, Oregon. You will especially notice a difference when you hear Josh Kramer's much improved voice and the high-quality speed metal used in "Steel Killers" and "In the Night," to name a couple.

SAINT shows feelings of hate for Satan and his demons in almost every one of these new songs.

Keep up the fight for the King. Buy this new album. But do it before your time runs out!

By Lonnie Crampsey

SAINT--Time's End

\*\*\*\*(out of 4)

LEVITICUS--feeling the power

The band from Sweden who gave us their first shot over a year ago with **I Shall Conquer** has released **The Strongest Power** on Pure Metal Records. The new release is an improvement over the band's debut album. There is a much better sound and the three members constructing LEVITICUS have improved on their talents. Songs like "On the Rock," "I've Got Power," and "A New Day" are a few of the hardest songs on the record.

Throughout the album they show praise and reverence to God while they sport the axe work on the guitars and transfer God's power directly to your ear drums.

Though the album is very good for the most part, a few spots might not make your mouth drop. Even so, this band has definately found and showed who the strongest power is: Jesus Christ. Look into this new album--it's got power!

By Lonnie Crampsey

LEVITICUS--The Strongest Power

\*\*\* (out of 4)

BARREN CROSS (Continued from page 2)

PRN: Tell us, why exactly is BARREN CROSS out in the world of metal? What is the band's main goal?

SW: Our whole purpose of being BARREN CROSS is to get across the message of who Jesus Christ is and what He did, His death and resurrection and what that means. That's simply it. In our first album **Rock For The King**, the message we get across is strong but the new album is more issue oriented; the songs aren't quite as evangelistic as on the first album. The new album has a song on abortion ("Killers of the Unborn"), one on terrorism ("Terrorist Child") and one on drug abuse. A song I wrote is called "King of Kings." It's a song about how great God is. So we've got a real wide variety of powerful lyrics.

PRN: Before I go, do you have any closing comments?

SW: Just that I hope everybody really listens to what we're trying to say and not the hype behind the music. We hope you enjoy the music but the real meat in what we're doing is in what we say. It's your choice to accept or reject what we say and it's your choice to look to God or Satan.



DANIEL BAND's first video, fifth album

The five year-old heavy metal group DANIEL BAND has been quite busy lately. Their well-done fourth effort *Rise Up* has begun the band's move into the secular music industry with many record stores now selling the album. Less than a year ago the band signed a distributing deal with Capitol Records.

After selling 30,000 copies of their 1984 Refuge Records release *Run From The Darkness*, DANIEL BAND hired seventy extras, spent \$22,000 and four long days in a jail filming their first video "Walk on the Water." The concept video shows a prison inmate who rejects God but finds faith and is spiritually transformed in a baptism scene at its conclusion. "We wanted to present a more accurate picture of Christianity in that God is exciting and dynamic," said guitarist and vocalist Toni Rossi. "We've done a video that says there's light for the darkness, one that's nonviolent." "The religious trappings were taken away because we don't feel that has much to do with Christianity anyway," added lead vocalist/bassist Dan McCabe.

The band goes on to explain their spiritual views. Toni said, "Music has always been a powerful motivator but a lot of musicians are using it to promote a lot of things that are wrong. Some people think it's irreverent but I think they're limiting God." DANIEL BAND's manager, Neil Dellandrea, added more to the discussion: "One of the things we're trying to do is show that God is just as relevant in the rock culture as he is anywhere else." "It's just another way of ministering," said rhythm guitarist Bill Findlay.

Even with increasing recognition, the four members work everyday jobs. Toni Rossi is a fourth grade teacher, Dan McCabe is an exterminator, drummer Matt DelDuca is a welder, and Bill Findlay is a computer programmer.

Recording preparations are being made for the band's fifth album anytime now and DANIEL BAND is looking at some more busy times ahead. Look for the band's new release this fall. By Dan Milette



PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER  
88 HIGH STREET  
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IN THIS ISSUE:

AMY GRANT -- BARREN CROSS -- DANIEL BAND --  
LEVITICUS -- REZ -- SAINT -- more!

PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY, 1987 Volume 1 Number 6

# TURE ROCK

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1987

VOL.1 NO. 7





## PETRA's John Schlitt: *The Inside Story*

BY DAVID TERPENY

John Schlitt may seem like the new kid on the block trying to duke it out with the bullies, but this talented singer has been rapidly gaining recognition as the new vocalist of the band PETRA.

"Back in '73," John states, "I was in a secular band called Head East. I wanted to play good rock 'n roll and I started off doing that. We put out an album and it went gold overnight. It was one of those rare times when you have an 'overnight sensation.' At that time I didn't have any Christian background but I knew God gave me a voice." John's band started the flow of fame and fortune, but the supply eventually got cut off.

John explains, "I fell into the trap that 90 to 95 percent of the secular rock stars fall into. In seven years I went from a good guy who just wanted to play good rock 'n roll to a drug and booze infected animal. Rock became more of a sacrifice than a reward. I was slowly killing myself."

John quit rock 'n rolling in 1980 and it was then that Jesus Christ entered his life and he "saw the world through Jesus' eyes. The Lord came in and my life took a fantastic new turn. I could begin to take one step at a time." He began to read the Bible and search for more truths. He leaves a message to teens at this point: "If you haven't read the Bible yet, do it! It is the truth. Sometimes it sounds like a fairy tale, but the Holy Spirit will begin to lead you and you'll realize it's the truth more and more." Continued on page 4

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## BRIDE's Rough History Spawns "Show No Mercy"

BY DAN MILETTE

Dale and Troy Thompson, the founding members of BRIDE, have been playing music most all of their lives. The brothers played in several bands then decided to start writing music. Eventually, they wrote forty songs and wanted to use them so Troy began playing the guitar and Dale played bass. One day in 1983, while in a record store, they met Steve Childers. Steve had been the drummer of a local Christian rock group that had just broken up. The trio got together and things fell in place. Naming themselves Matryx, they recorded two demo tapes: **Monkey See Monkey Do** and **PG-13**. Just after this, when Dale came back from a trip to New York, Steve announced he wanted to leave the band.

Fortunately, the brothers already knew of Joey Johnson, a drummer that played with them in one of their earlier bands. Joey was enrolled and played on their other demo **Silent Madness**. Conflicting musical interests got in the way so Joey was eventually asked to leave. Before the exit, the band began jamming with Stephan Roland, found that he was an excellent drummer, and asked him to join. At this time, another band named Matryx surfaced. In order to avoid confusion, Dale and Troy decided to change the band's name to BRIDE.

The group opened for Daniel Band at a concert in early 1986. BRIDE knew beforehand that Refuge Records would be at the concert so they borrowed a guitarist from another band for the event. The result was BRIDE's contract with Pure Metal Records.

The band got Steve Osborne to play guitar when the borrowed musician went back to his band. Dale moved off of bass and concentrated on vocals to make room for Scott Hall. Scott had been the band's photographer for the past three years. BRIDE signed the contract with Pure Metal in August, 1986 and recorded the album **Show No Mercy**.

The band was plagued with another member change after completing the record. Steve Osborne was invited to join a secular band and decided to leave. BRIDE picked up guitarist Eric Tripton.

Predictably, Eric left after two months. He was another one who had a conflict of interests. Tim Morrow replaced the position and ended the band's member changes. To date, BRIDE is: Dale Thompson as vocalist, Troy Thompson and Tim Morrow on guitars, Scott Hall as bassist, and Stephan Roland on drums.

When asked about the band's **Show No Mercy** debut, vocalist Dale Thompson said, "There's a lot of themes to the album. It's laid out like a book. You can't listen to one song and judge the entire album." He went on to explain that the album deals with God, Satan, and issues like drug abuse. He continued, "Our title cut is about the Christian's fight against the Devil. The main theme of the album is 'be ready!' We hope to do a follow up album because our new material is twice as good as our present stuff. We've been experimenting with a new type of heavy metal."

Dale ends the conversation with a straightforward statement: "Keep on supporting Christian metal because the more support, the better it'll get. Even the Christians are condemning what we're doing and it's sad. It's like they're fighting God. You don't have to like something to support what it stands for. If it wasn't for Jesus Christ, we wouldn't be playing music. He is the music. That's why we play."





*BRIDE (L-R) Stephen Roland, Troy Thompson, Dale Thompson, Scott Hall, and Tim Morrow*  
**JOHN SCHLITT** (Continued from page 2)

Bob Hartman, the founder/song writer/guitarist of PETRA, called John five years after his departure from secular rock and asked him if he'd like to sing for the band. John quickly agreed. "I know for a fact that Bob's calling was a part of God's timing because it was the perfect time for me as it was for PETRA."

His joining just over a year ago was met enthusiastically by band members and fans alike with "very good reaction at concerts and with record sales." The band itself has been "growing spiritually stronger."

John Schlitt is an avid defender of Christian rock and a just as avid criticizer of secular rock. In explaining why, John states, "Thirty years ago, the Church let Satan have rock music for himself and he has been using it very proficiently for his own gains. Finally, in the past five or six years, Christian rock has slowly been taking that tool away from Satan and is starting to use it for what it was originally created for--to praise God!" When asked if the Christian message really matters to fans that listen to secular rock as well, John replied, "Kids say, 'Yeah, I don't listen to the words, I just listen to the beat,' but the problem is that the subconscious hears it, they have no choice. If they listen to PETRA, great, at least they're getting the Word of God. Music in whatever form is more powerful than people give it credit for and this is why rock has had such a powerful influence on them." John says in closing, "Speaking for the band and myself, we're all excited and we're looking forward to God's plan for us in the years ahead."



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C O N V E R S A T I O N S

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## SAINT Plans Invasion; Enlists New Drummer

BY DAVID TERPENY

There are many Christian metal bands wandering around, but one seems to stand out among the rest for several reasons. Besides being the best by far, they also display a multitude of talents and are currently riding on the choruses of praise following the release of their newest album "Time's End" on Pure Metal Records. There are many questions surfacing about SAINT and I hope the following interview with Richard Lynch, SAINT's bassist, will give you some insight into one of today's best bands--SAINT.

PURE ROCK NEWSLETTER: Could you give us some history behind SAINT?

Richard Lynch: SAINT was formed around 1981 under a different name and we're heavy metal. How's that?

PRN: (laughter) Can you tell us more?

RL: More? Okay, as I was saying, SAINT was originally formed around 1981 under the name Gentile by John Mahan and myself. After a short period of time, John left and recruited Gene Mclindon on drums. At this time things really weren't going all that well because all I had was myself on bass and Gene on drums. I needed a guitarist. Gene wrote a letter to a friend named Josh Kramer who played and immediately agreed to fly down from Alaska to join. At the time of Josh's arrival, John Mahan returned and we accidentally discovered that Josh could sing so he became our vocalist. Soon after this we recorded Warriors Of The Son and embarked on a tour. This was in 1984--the name change to SAINT had occurred the year before. We have recently released a new album Time's End and with a new drummer by the name of John Perrine, are soon to be embarking on the SAINT Invasion Tour '87.\*

PRN: Many people say Christianity cannot and should not exist with heavy metal and it's attitude. Being a member of a Christian metal band, what are your comments toward this?

RL: I think that the attitude really has nothing to do with the music itself but with the person who is singing the song. Music comes from the heart and if you're a pervert in mind then you're going to sing about perverted things. I just think that if we take a look at the person who's playing the music and what's on their mind and what they're doing, that's as far as it really has to go.

PRN: Why does SAINT wear leather and studs like other "bad-influence" bands?

RL: We feel that most of the kids who listen to heavy metal like the leather and studs look and it relates to them very well. If you consider 1st Corinthians 9:20, Paul says, "Become a Jew to a Jew and a Gentile to a Gentile." We wear leather and studs so that we can first gain their confidence and then talk to them about Jesus Christ. As a basic rule, when we run around down town we wear regular clothes and look just like everyday people.

PRN: With the metal controversy building, what is your opinion on groups like the PMRC--The Parent's Music Resource Center--and the issue of censorship?

RL: As far as the censorship goes, I think a lot of the stars have blown it out of proportion. All they're trying to do is put a rating on records. Music is a very spiritual thing. You hear it and it affects the way you think and the way you believe. Ratings give the parent the option to say, "Well, this is not good and I don't want my kids listening to it." Parents are responsible for what their kids do, how they behave, and what they listen to as well. I'm a full grown man and my father still gets on my case all the time and I respect him for that. I think what the PMRC is doing is great, though they have a long way to go before they receive my complete support.

PRN: What do you want people to get out of the theory behind your newest album "Time's End"?

RL: I want them to realize that the return of Jesus Christ is going to happen and all the things that have come to pass in the prophecies in the book of Revelation, all these things are happening right now in front of our eyes and if we don't pay attention and we just sit around and do nothing about it then we're going to remain on the Earth and burn with it as far as I'm concerned. Not one prophecy in the Bible has ever been wrong so we can pretty much rest assured that the ones that haven't come to pass soon will.

PRN: Can you share with us your experience of being born again?

RL: Well, my experience of being saved was like that of many others. I had a heavy drug background and I basically got myself in a hot spot and had nowhere else to turn and I finally just had to look up and say, "Well, God, what's it going to be?" At that moment He actually reached down and revealed Himself to me. All my life I had doubts, I thought that well, oh yeah, there's a Supreme Being but I was never really secure in that and now, as of eight years ago, I became quite secure in that thought because He actually touched my heart. He reached down and made me realize that He is real.

PRN: Do you have any closing comments?

RL: Well, I think that if you don't have Jesus, you don't have anything. That's it, right there, that's all it boils down to.

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## **STRYKEN Debut Strikes the World**

When STRYKEN released a twelve-inch single "Rock On/Surprise" in early 1986, the band made many headlines. Soon afterward, news came of an all-new full-length album. After months of waiting, STRYKEN's First Strike on Crystal Records invaded the world.

Starting with the first cut, the album reveals Dale Streiker on vocals and guitars; his brother Steven's talent with vocals, keyboards, and guitars; Ezekiel Vade on bass; and Joey Knight's skill for skin pounding. "Crush the Head of Satan" is the best song on the album. Their ballad "The Answer" is one to remember. The title cut is a ripping music anthem concluding with Dale's echoing voice screaming "Listen America!" The thunder starts to roll immediately afterward in their searing remixed version of "Rock On."

Overall, this album is very good. I strongly encourage you to buy this album and listen to it more than once. I guarantee the serious metal fan will appreciate this full-length debut from the Sons of Thunder.

By Dan Milette

### STRYKEN--First Strike

\*\*\*½(out of 4)

## **PETRA Spreads the Word to the Street**

I practically wrote PETRA off when I heard Greg Volz was going solo, but then the remaining band equipped with rock veteran John Schlitt recorded Back To The Street for Star Song Records. The band's seventh album was produced by Dino and John Elefante.

The best song on this latest job is "Shakin' the House." Other great songs are the title cut, "Whole World," "Altar Ego," "Another Crossroad," "King's Ransom," and two well-done praise songs: "Fool's Gold" and "Thankful Heart."

John Schlitt has done an excellent job filling the shoes of Greg Volz; PETRA founder Bob Hartman whips out some great guitar licks; Mark Kelly handles the bass well; drummer Louie Weaver shows his stuff; and John Lawry on keyboards makes PETRA's sound come alive.

I strongly recommend this album if you haven't picked it up yet. Help relieve the band's burden--help PETRA get the message of Jesus Christ back to the street.

By Dan Milette

### PETRA--Back To The Street

\*\*\*½(out of 4)



# TRUE ROCK

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1987

VOL. 1 NO.8

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**MICHAEL W. SMITH 'goes for it'**

*Plus —*

**A conversation with MESSIAH PROPHET guitarist Andy Strauss!  
STRYPER — BLOODGOOD — WHITE CROSS — and more!**

## MICHAEL W. SMITH 'goes for it' in *The Big Picture*

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DAN MILETTE

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MICHAEL W. SMITH grew up in West Virginia then moved to Nashville, Tennessee in 1978. That was a good idea because just two and a half years later, he got his first song writing contract. He met Amy Grant and Gary Chapman then became involved with management team Blanton & Harrell in 1982. "That was the initial thing that really kicked things off," Michael says. After working with Amy Grant for a while, he decided to do his own album. *Project* earned him several Christian music awards.

A Christian since age ten, MICHAEL W. SMITH feels he's been called to do music. "God is definitely the inspiration for what I'm doing." How can such a talented and popular artist handle the fame? "I pretty much blow it off," Michael responds. "My managers make sure I don't get out of hand! They're there to say, 'Hey. God's blessing what we're doing so remember that it's God who's made it possible for anything that you've done.' I realize that I haven't made this whole thing happen. It's been planned by God. So here I am and I'm glad I'm here!"

About his latest album *The Big Picture*, Michael explains why his music has changed so drastically. "I was ready to get on the edge and just go for it. When I did the last album, I feel that I tried to hold back a little. I just had to go for it. We decided that this was the record to spend the bucks on and just make it a good one. That's what we did. There's a lot of things I'm trying to say in the album. It deals with some pretty hard issues that kids are dealing with today." (Continued on page 6)

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## WHITE CROSS: Latest Pure Metal artist plans debut

—DAN MILETTE—

A few years ago, the band that became known as WHITE CROSS played copy tunes from well know Christian bands, but when guitarist Rex Carroll entered the picture, the band began writing and playing their own material. "I'd say that was when the band actually began. When it was formed, a few of the guys used to play in church on a regular basis." Rex explained that WHITE CROSS was formed specifically to evangelize young people outside of the church. "Rock is the best way for us to do that. That's what most kids listen to. We play for that reason." He quickly admits that the band "has been a calling from God every step of the way."

For a long time, the band was "stuck in the mud" and did nothing but rehearse. Rex tried to leave the band but he felt a calling from God to "hang with it." In the spring of 1986, WHITE CROSS began distributing demos. Copies were sent everywhere. When no contracts were signed, the defeated band finally decided to look up for results after their own efforts failed. "We let God take over." And He did.

A close friend of Rex got a job at Refuge Music Group where he introduced the company to the band. Shortly after, the Pure Metal record division picked up the band. Rex replied, "I knew it was the Lord's doing--it was through no efforts of our own."

WHITE CROSS consists of band founder Scott Wenzel as lead vocalist, Mark Hedl plays drums, bass guitar is controlled by John Sproule, and Rex Carroll masters guitar.

Of the band's self titled debut being released in May, Rex said we can expect one ballad, one guitar solo, and eight "heavy duty crankers." Rex wrote most of the material on the album.

Presently in the recording studio with their vocalist who "sounds like a mix between Vince Neil and Steven Percy," WHITE CROSS is sure to make quite an impact when the album is released.

"I'd love to go full time with the band. That's my calling. It's my vocation and that's what I intend to pursue. If I can do it full time in WHITE CROSS, that would be great. Whatever happens in WHITE CROSS," Rex continues, "is up to the Lord. We're just trying to follow His leading."

When asked for an opinion on the conflict of Christians vs. Christian metal, Rex said, "I think that people who put down Christian rock may be 'honestly ignorant.' Humans, as we are, tend to put down something we don't know much about. But I do think some Christian musicians should reexamine their priorities. What the Christian bands are doing overall is of the Lord. We make mistakes, but nobody's perfect. Don't forget to continue supporting Christian metal with prayer. It's great to know that people are backing you."

C O N V E R S A T I O N S

## MESSIAH PROPHET masters a metal ministry

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RAY FLETCHER

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**PURE ROCK:** How did MESSIAH PROPHET get together and when?

**ANDY STRAUSS:** MESSIAH PROPHET was formed approximately ten years ago as a vision of two college kids named Dean Pellman and Gil Tabor. At its inception, Messiah Prophet Band was an acoustic gospel band. In 1983, Charlie Clark and I joined the band and the sound and style began to change to heavy metal. As MESSIAH PROPHET continued, we discovered different callings and personal difficulties within the members. The year 1985 was the year we put things together. We got involved in a management team (Fletcher-Christianson Promotions) that helped us define our musical and spiritual callings and goals, and develop a plan of action. One of the problems we had was that we never really decided who the band was and the direction the Lord wanted us to go. Once we started to organize and find out who we were, personnel changes were made to fit the personality of the ministry. There were no fights or hard feelings and the changes were so apparent that everyone knew it was of God. Thus, we picked up drummer Dave "Thunder" Armstrong, Joe Shirk on bass, and rhythm guitarist Brian Nicarri at nearly the same time and completed the band as people know it. Our debut *Rock The Flock* was picked up by Morada Records and the sales were impressive enough to allow us to sign with Pure Metal Records. Our latest album *Master Of The Metal* was released in July, 1986 and has sold well. Ironically, there are no original members left in MESSIAH PROPHET. However, without each of them, we would not be here.

**PR:** What is the emphasis of the band? What are you trying to accomplish?

**AS:** We are trying to teach, preach, and make disciples of all men. Jesus told us to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. This is our goal. We are so geared for street-type kids that it's almost like a specialized ministry. Amazingly, we still bring in a lot of older people to our concerts.

**PR:** How did you come to know the Lord?

**AS:** I had a really intense history of drug and alcohol abuse when I was in high school. By the time I was a Junior I realized that drugs were ruining my career in music. Since music was what I wanted more than anything else in life, I started getting off them on my own. Amazingly, I kicked the drug habit, but I could still feel the emptiness inside. It was then that I was asked by an old girlfriend, who had become a Christian since I last talked to her, to be in a musical that her church was doing. I was definitely not into the church scene, but the acting and singing was cool. Ironically, they had me play the part of Christ! On the night of the performance as I prayed in the garden and said, "Father, not my will but Yours be done," I really meant it and I gave my heart to Jesus.

**PR:** How and why do you feel that God has lead you into the heavy metal ministry?

**AS:** After becoming a Christian, I continued to play in secular rock bands for about three months. The Lord convicted me that this was wrong. After finally accepting the conviction, I laid down my music before the Lord. I quit the band I was playing with, cut off my long hair, and put my guitars in the closet to gather



dust. I told God I didn't want to play rock 'n roll anymore because I wanted to serve Him. A few months later, I went to a Christian rock concert. At the time, I didn't know there was such a thing as Christian rock. When I saw them, I asked God what was going on! As I watched, God's spirit came upon me and I heard Him say, "This will be you in 1986 if you give your music to me." I said to God, "But I thought you didn't want me to play rock 'n roll anymore." God said, "I don't want you to just play rock 'n roll. I want you to use the talents I've given you to reach kids who don't hear my word. I want you to minister." When you hear God talking like that, you don't disagree. God was true to his word and has blessed the band generously.

**PR:** Do you feel that Christian heavy metal can really change lives? How and why?

**AS:** Anything can be used by God to change lives. In all things, God works for the good of those who love Him and who have been called according to His purpose. That's the Word of God talking, not me! Kids on the street don't want to listen to a dude in a three-piece suit. Kids are rebellious against authority. Believe me, I have been there. People in three-piece suits remind the kids of these authority figures. The kids don't want to listen to them about anything. They sure aren't going to listen to somebody like that trying to tell them about Jesus. Kids identify with people like themselves. That's what our ministry is about--getting the kids to identify with us so that we can tell them about Jesus.

**PR:** What are you trying to accomplish on your latest album? What topics are you stressing? What topics are you addressing?

**AS:** Basically, with this album, we tried to write and play material that the kids will identify with. We wanted to make an album that Christians and non-Christians would listen to and say, "Man, these guys are good--listen to this!" The lyrics in most of the songs are purposely very basic, simply telling who Jesus is and what the kids need to do to be really free. You must remember that MESSIAH PROPHET's audience is over 50 percent unsaved and unchurched youth. We are a first step evangelistic ministry. It is ridiculous for us to address deep theological truths or controversies to kids who have not even heard the simple plan of salvation. We deal with everyday problems and issues like broken relationships and backsliding. There is also some plain and simple heavy metal praise and worship.



MESSIAH PROPHET (l-r) Joe Shirk, David Thunder, Charlie Clark, Brian Nicarri, and Andy Strauss.

PR: What problems, trials, high times, and low times have helped shape you in preparing for ministry? What things have you been able to overcome that could be a help to others?

AS: The Lord in His infinite wisdom has tried me by fire in so many ways. I have been involved in some terrible relationships and even had to deal with suicidal girlfriends. I have seen drugs kill some of my best friends and drugs just about kill me. After living in the streets, I know what it's like not to have a home. I've dealt with rough parents and abortion victims. I've seen the world and I don't like what it has to offer. On the other hand, I've seen junkies turn their lives around overnight, families open their homes to homeless kids, people baptized in the Holy Spirit, and friendships renewed. I have seen Jesus and I like His style.

PR: Certain evangelists and churches oppose heavy metal as a form of ministry. How do you handle situations when you are confronted with this kind of skepticism?

AS: This is a "loaded" question that I have to answer in every interview. The thing I usually do is remind the person that the Devil is not a creator--he is an imitator. God created music and Satan warped it. Satan has always wanted to be like God. He took what God created and twisted it so he could use it adversely. It is not the music that changes lives, it is the words. Likewise, it is not the preacher that saves the soul, it is the Word of God. Music is a vehicle for proclaiming a message. The message, whether spoken, sung, screamed, whispered, hand signaled, or any other method of communication, is what does the damage or good. The Word says you should recognize them by their fruits. If a ministry is bearing good fruit, it is of God in my opinion, whether I like or appreciate it or not. That usually does the trick. If it doesn't, I say to those people, "Well, the Bible says to go into all the world and preach, teach, and make disciples. Will you come with me to the streets tomorrow and tell the kids out there about Jesus? The usual response to this is, "That's not my calling." My response to them is, "Well, that is mine!"

#### MICHAEL W. SMITH (Continued from page 2)

"If there's any song that covers the basis for what I'm trying to say, it would be 'You're Alright.' The problems that kids are facing is really with low self esteem. I get a lot of letters from kids that are dying for someone to encourage them. They don't love themselves. I tell them that no matter what they've done, God still loves them. I think that's the message I'm trying to portray. We're out there to encourage kids."

What can we expect in the future for MICHAEL W. SMITH? Keep your eyes open this summer for a live album of The Big Picture tour. Plans are being made for an all new album to go into production this fall for a release of early 1988. "I think the music will be about the same as last time but I've got a couple killer ballads that I think are some of the best material I've ever written. I feel that I may have gotten carried away a little on The Big Picture. I missed out on some good slow songs. I'm a ballad writer and can write good ones. For some reason though, I haven't put them on my records that much." Michael won't know the content for sure until he's in the studio. He wrote "Lamu" and "Pursuit of the Dream" in the studio for the last album.

Some exciting things are in the works for MICHAEL W. SMITH concerning the pop market. Keep watch!

In closing, Michael said, "Stay close to Jesus. He's where it's at." Michael would like to be known as a great father and husband. "That's a pretty major priority in my life."



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## ***To Hell With The Devil* tour shows STRYPER's stuff**

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DAN MILETTE

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The lights go out. The eerie "Abyss" starts playing and the entire auditorium is overflowing with excitement. The combination of lights and smoke give the stage a haunted look. One at a time, the members of STRYPER step on the stage and wave to the screaming audience. Suddenly, all lights are extinguished. Complete stage silence looms, then bright white lights stream down from above like a sudden flash of lightning. Guitars flail, bass booms, and drums thud and echo through the building. Five thousand wild fans rock the auditorium. Michael Sweet runs across the stage, seizes the cordless mike, and sings, "Speak of the Devil/He's no friend of mine/To turn from him is what we've got in mind!" The fans have trampled their general admission seats underfoot as they flock to the stage. Hands and fists go up in the air and bic lighters flick on and burn bright. "To hell with the Devil!" Michael screams.

The concert surely would have been the most power and energy packed one STRYPER had ever offered if they featured a guitar or drum solo. But they didn't. Even so, the 90 minute presentation was their longest. They played every song off their latest plus at least four from each of their other two albums.

I was fortunate enough to be there when the STRYPER bus pulled up and was the first to meet Michael Sweet, Robert Sweet, Tim Gaines, and Oz Fox as they stepped out of the bus. An hour earlier, my photographer and I watched the stage crew set up for the concert. At this time, barely fifty people were at the front gates.

For the first two hours after the band arrived, they rehearsed. Michael Sweet did voice exercises just before the band played "Calling on You" and "To Hell With the Devil" for practice.

After a high-energy concert, I was invited backstage and got a chance to meet with each member of STRYPER. When I asked Michael if any plans were being made for a new album, he said, "I don't know." Michael writes "most of the music while on the road" so writing will soon be underway.

Those of you who haven't seen STRYPER in concert yet, do it. Be prepared for a great show. Remember that their albums are getting softer, but their concerts are getting louder!



*Michael Sweet with Dan Milette, Pure Rock's publisher.*

R E V I E W

## Second BLOODGOOD Album Unveils Tripled Talent

Saint and Messiah Prophet both came out with incredibly good sequels last year, and now another Christian metal band takes a bow. BLOODGOOD's **Detonation** on Frontline Records is incredible. Stop. Read that again. INCREDIBLE. Do you understand?

"Battle of the Flesh" starts the rock rolling with familiar guitar moves, maybe causing some of you to recognize the band seconds after the music starts, but overall, BLOODGOOD's talent has tripled.

This speed metal album features quite a lineup. "Crucify," the band's first single released the third week of March, is the best cut this album offers. Les Carlson takes the role of Pontius Pilate in this powerful and moving example of heavy metal: "I say set Him free/You say you want Him to die/He has done nothing/You say...crucify!"

The second best song is "Vagrant People," a sad-but-true song about the spiritually stubborn non-Christian. This song features awesome back-up vocals as well as power packed drums and guitars.

Produced by lead singer Les Carlson, **Detonation** blows the doors off of the band's self-titled debut released in early 1986.

Congratulations to new drummer Mark Welling. He's done an excellent job replacing J.T. Taylor with a larger variety of drums and is a big part of the band's improvement. Also nice work for Michael Bloodgood on bass and guitarist David Zaffiro.

BLOODGOOD's **Detonation** could be one of 1987's biggest sellers. Your metal collection will suffer without this album. Resist the impact. Be one of the first to buy this album. Dan Milette

BLOODGOOD--Detonation

\*\*\*\*(out of 4)



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# TURE ROCK

NEWSLETTER

MAY-JULY, 1987 VOL. 1 NO. 9 \$1.00



**STRYPER** speaks: an interview with Robert Sweet  
*plus*  
**GREG X. VOLZ — GARDIAN**  
*and more!*



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PURE ROCK

MAY-JULY, 1987

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C O N V E R S A T I O N S

## A few Sweet thoughts on STRYPER

----- Dan Milette -----

Recently, I got to ask the founder and Visual Timekeeper of the Christian once-metal-band STRYPER some good questions. Besides avoiding one or two, Robert answered with obvious sincerity and it is great to see that this Christian rock band is still just as strong for Christ as they were when they started out. Though they have calmed down since then.

PURE ROCK: How did you get started in music?

ROBERT SWEET: I bought my first drum set when I was eight years old. I don't know exactly why I wanted to play the drums, I just did. At the same time, my brother Michael, the singer of the band, had his first guitar when he was five. I never had any lessons; none of the guys in the band have ever had lessons. For years we just kept practicing and playing. When Michael was fourteen and I was seventeen, we played together in our first band and here we are ten years later.



PR: Looking back at how far you've come since first starting with music, what feelings or comments do you have that you'd like to share with us?

RS: Well, I'm really happy about a lot of the things that are happening but I hope a lot of walls that are still out there will soon be broken down. I feel there's a lot of people who still have the wrong idea about STRYPER. I know a lot of people feel that we're this type of band who fanatically addresses this unpleasant message. I just hope everyone out there realizes that we are a rock 'n roll band and why we sing about what we do. We're very serious about it; we mean it, you know. We aren't these type of people who are trying to force anything on anybody. We do hope people hear the message and hope they do accept the one we sing about. I hope the barriers are being broken down. I'm very happy about where things are now, we have come a long way and I think it's all from a lot of prayer and a lot of hard work.

PR: With the release of "To Hell With The Devil," it appears that STRYPER is becoming more of a rock band than a heavy metal band. Are you calming down to gain a larger audience?

RS: I don't think we've calmed down any. I think we've become more radical. To be quite truthful with you, if you look at all three albums the first album is only a six-song EP. The record company wanted us to focus on a harder edge on the first EP. I look at it as a progression of song-writing. The more songs you write, the more things you find out. The more records you do, the more you discover. I don't look at it as "calming down." I look at it as the band progressing. We're growing in our music. In "To Hell With The Devil," we didn't do anything "un-STRYPER." We just wanted a better produced album, with a lot of rock tunes, and yet a lot of songs that were maybe a little bit on the simpler side, as far as the arrangement goes, for people to get into.

PR: What can we expect in the future for STRYPER's music and message?

RS: Well, I think that people can expect to hear the album and say, "Wow, that's even better than 'To Hell With The Devil!'"

PR: What do you mean by "better?" Compare it with your first two.

RS: I think the next one's going to be the best STRYPER record yet. I know every band can say that and they probably do but I feel that up to now, "To Hell With The Devil" is the best and the next one will be better than that.

PR: Many of your fans feel that your first album was the best and that "Soldiers Under Command" compared with it, then "To Hell With The Devil" took a dive. They say you mellowed out.

RS: I don't really agree with that. It may seem that way but "To Hell With The Devil" is the best selling out of them all. In my eyes, nothing has mellowed out, it's just grown. I know they're talking in a musical pace and I'm talking record sales, but I think that's just a personal opinion. I'm very complimented by the fact that someone would like our first album "The Yellow And Black Attack!". I like it too. When we did "To Hell With The Devil," we felt those were the best songs to put on the record. Back when we did the first album, we already had some of those songs that were on "To Hell With The Devil." So it wasn't a type of thing where everything's changing. We have songs that may go on the next record that we wrote in 1982 and 1983. So I don't think anything's mellowed out or lessened any. I think it's just become more universal.

PR: So what do you have for new material?

RS: Nothing is really put together yet. There's a lot of work still to do. We're not really concentrated on the next record right now; we're just trying to get through with the "To Hell With The Devil" World Tour and all the other things that go along with it. We're taking one step at a time. I'd say probably in September or October we'll take a break and go into pre-production for the next record. I'd say the next record will be out around January 1988.



PR: What are you looking at for themes?

RS: Well, I probably shouldn't say! I'll just say it's going to be a great record. I'm not bragging on this, okay?! I don't brag about us as people. I brag about the one we sing about. He's someone to be proud of. When I say that, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying, "yeah, we're great," I'm just saying that we're going to work really, really hard on the next album. We'll spend a lot of time on it and it'll be our best.

PR: "To Hell With The Devil" peaked in the low thirties on Billboard's chart and went Gold in four months, giving you a larger audience. How has the band managed to continue to give God the glory through increasing success, recognition, and temptation to claim the credit for yourself?

RS: Well, you realize that when you stand up for God, what He freely gives, he can freely take away. We realize that. We know we've worked very hard but we really feel that God has allowed us to have what we have now. True, it's not at a point where it's as big as some bands right now. I mean, it's not bigger than Bon Jovi. It's not bigger than Poison, as far as numbers and record sales. We feel that real soon it's going to get big because the message isn't just a rock 'n roll message. It's a message that changes lives. I think that a year or two from now it could be really, really big.

PR: How have you learned to deal with the skeptic eye of the non-Christian and the enormous pressure of having millions of people watch you to see if you're going to make a false step?

RS: You know what? I have come to the realization that there is always going to be some watchful eye whether it's a person who is a Christian or a non-Christian. Whether you're a good guy or you're a bad guy, whether you're a politician, a member of a rock band, or a television evangelist, someone's always going to point a finger, someone's always going to say something, and we're to the point where we just feel that we want to serve God to the best of our abilities. We can't listen to everybody's opinion because all that does is bring confusion.

PR: There are many Christian metal fans out there who are convicted against secular bands known for sexual and satanic influences. You have said that STRYPER would welcome the opportunity to tour with such groups as Motely Crue and W.A.S.P.--known for these very things. What would you say to your fans that want to see you but not the other stuff?

RS: I think that's a decision that they'd have to make. Christ chose twelve of the worst for disciples. Their lives were completely changed around. That's how we look at the situation. We don't want to be this Christian band who goes in, points a finger, and says, "You're bad and you're bad, so we won't play with you!" We want to get out there and play. If there's an opportunity for STRYPER to play with Ratt, Motely Crue, or whatever, we'll go for it. We want to see those bands come to know Christ. A lot of bands think they'd have to quit their music, they've got to give up having fun, and so forth. We just want to see people accept Christ. I'd say that whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian, if we play with Ratt or Motely Crue or whoever it is, come out and support us. That's what we've always been about and that's what we'll always be about to hopefully reach people. For us that's the best way to do it.

PR: So was STRYPER created solely to minister to the lost or are you here also to encourage the saved?

RS: Both! We're here to encourage and spread a message. We're here to rock 'n roll. We're here to let people know that you can have a good time being a Christian. We're here to tell you to take out the ultimate life insurance and accept Jesus Christ. We're all those things. We're here to spread a message to people who don't know Christ; we're here to play great music for Christian people who really feel that they've lost out because they can't listen to the type of music that they used to listen to before they became Christians. We're here to supply music with a great message. We'll do everything we can for the glory of God for everyone possible.

PR: Many people feel that your expression "Jesus Christ Rocks" seems to bring Jesus down to our level. Instead of causing us to look up to Him, we look across to Him as a "buddy" that likes to dance around in tight clothes and bang his head. It's just hard to picture such a holy and glorious God doing that.

RS: He IS a holy and glorious God. He came down to the level of man in the form of Christ, walked and talked with man, and when we put that message out, what we are trying to say is HE is the rock. We use a lot of those expressions to get a point across to people who aren't Christians. A lot of people who aren't Christians see something like that and go "that's really cool." That brings them a little closer to knowing God. The last thing STRYPER would ever want to do is mock God. I think that's obvious. We have meant nothing disrespectful by that. It basically means that Jesus Christ IS the rock and through the rock 'n roll music we play we're going to let everyone know that.

PR: How would you wrap up the band's overall feeling of your "To Hell With The Devil" touring?

RS: Well, we're very excited, we're very thankful, and I just want to take this time to thank the people out there who have been supportive. Whoever you are, no matter what faith you are, young or old, Christian or not, whether you're into rock 'n roll or not, if you support STRYPER, we appreciate it. We've had a great time out here, we've still got to go to Europe, Australia, Japan, Hawaii, and we've got another month in the United States. We're having a good time, we've seen a lot of good things come to be, and we wouldn't have it any other way.

PR: What would you like your fans to think of when they see the word STRYPER?

RS: At this point, I think everybody should know what STRYPER stands for. I think some people may have heard it and still not received the full impact. STRYPER stands for Salvation Through Redemption Yielding Peace, Encouragement, and Righteousness. In other words, Christ died on the cross for us. The "T" in STRYPER resembles the cross. Through all the suffering He went through for us, we can have Peace, Encouragement, and Righteousness. You're really not going to find any peace until you find Christ.

You can have all the money you want, you can have a blast, your life can be in the fun zone all the time but once it's all over, it's not the fun zone anymore without Christ. That's forever! We just want to let people know that even if you know what STRYPER stands for, if you know we stand for Christ, don't just listen to the music and forget about what you have to do to become a Christian. You have to make a decision to serve God. We want people to remember that and act upon that for their own sake.

## GREG X. VOLZ goes solo in style

----- Dan Milette -----

After recording six albums and performing over 500 concerts as Petra's vocalist, GREG X. VOLZ decided to leave the band and pursue a solo career. Greg explained his feelings and reasons for leaving. "Mike Schmidz, a good friend of mine whom I've known for over twelve years, worked with me ten years ago. We worked, wrote, and did studio work together." Before Petra, back in 1975, Greg had started the preliminary work on his first record. "Things just did not work out. The Lord made it very clear that it wasn't time," Greg explains. A year later, Greg got a call from Petra and sang for them on their second album "Come And Join Us." "The work I had started with Mike just sat on the back burner for a while."

Ten years and six albums later, Greg was in a position where his record contracts and legal obligations with Petra were completed and he had the choice of what he could do next. "I was really looking forward to working with Mike again. It came to the point that I felt I needed to fulfill that commitment. I felt that it was something the Lord had spoken. So, I was faced with another four years with Petra, or to jump out into the deep and say, 'Okay, if I don't do it now, I never will.'" He went ahead with a lot of prayer and made the move. He gave Petra the notice in January of 1985, before starting the "Beat The System" tour. That gave them a full year to find a new vocalist. "I really don't think it hurt Petra in the transition; they made it fairly smoothly. John Schlitt came in and filled that position. I think he does a good job and they'll continue on as a ministry." Greg continues, "Leaving Petra wasn't an easy thing to do. Those guys have been family for so many years. I still see them and spend time with them, but leaving was something I wanted and needed to do."

After giving Petra the notice, he re-scheduled plans with Mike Schmidz. Through the rest of 1985, he worked on his first solo album "The River Is Rising." "In my off time, with Petra that year, I made trips to Missouri for five days at a time and wrote music. By November, we'd written 26 songs." He selected eight of those 26 and then wrote "All I Can Do" and "Still Waters" with producer Jonathan Brown later. "The music in this album is as good as anything I've ever done, both musically and stylistically. I think it fits me even better than the Petra material. Bob Hartman did most of the writing for Petra. There were certain guidelines and confinements to that style. This new music has more R & B, more jazz-influenced pop that I like. I can sing any style, but for me it was exactly what I wanted to do. The record turned out really well, it wasn't like a 'first record'; to me it felt like the next Petra record."



What about his band "Pieces of Eight"? "The Lord's given me a real hot and kickin' band. I've never planned on these people being in it. It's just that they arrived, and the Lord provided." When asked about how he came up with the band's title, Greg replied, "It was a crazy idea. We said, 'Well, we've got to call the band something.'" They came up with everything from "Pieces of Fat" to "Peter's Apostles and the Water Walkers" in their search for a title. Then "Pieces of Eight" was selected. "The number eight is very significant because in the scriptures, the number eight represents 'a new beginning.' These are 'the pieces of a new beginning.'"

Since then, Mike Schmidz has continued to write for Greg Volz and will be the major contributor on the next record. Greg says, "I've already collected the majority of the music. We're getting ready to work on it in the next few weeks. Most of it will be recorded in June and July and should be ready for a September release." With songs like "Backburner" and the powerful "Take Me to the End of the World," this second solo release from GREG X. VOLZ promises to be a hit. "It will definitely be a good record. I can tell you that much."

In closing, Greg leaves us a message to think about. "I don't think you're ever too old to change your life. That says a lot for me. I'm still making some radical changes in my life and my career. I've always done that and will continue to do that regardless of my age. I mean, hey, I've probably got another ten years rockin' before I decide to settle down and just produce. I enjoy what I do a great deal. I just thank God I've got the opportunity to do something I love to do."



PIECES OF EIGHT (L-R): Joe English-drums; Spencer Campbell-bass; Kirk Henderson-guitars; Greg Volz-vocals, and Mike Damus-keyboards and guitars.

## GARDIAN looks to the Future

----- DAVID TERPENY -----

"Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Ephesians 6:11-12.

This Bible verse is the underlying message that the "modern and futuristic" band GARDIAN tries to put across to its fans. Says bassist Dave Bach, "When it comes to non-believers, we like to present the Gospel in a different light. We try to give a powerful presentation of the Gospel in more of a historical way."

GARDIAN was formed in 1983 under the name of Fusion by guitarist/vocalist Paul Cawley and Dave, who had known Paul previously. Dave explains, "Paul started running ads for a Christian metal band. I saw the ad, called, and it turned out that we had worked together about four years prior."

The band has gone through several personnel changes since this. A demo tape attracted the attention of Enigma Records in 1986. Their present line-up is Paul, Dave, Rikk Hart on drums, and lead guitarist Tony Palacios. When they signed with Enigma, they changed their name to GARDIAN.

The album is tentatively titled "Future Shock" and will be produced by Stryper's guitarist Oz Fox. How did GARDIAN get in touch with Sir Oz? Dave tells us, "We've known the guys in Stryper casually for a while because we're all from the same area."



GARDIAN (L-R): Tony Palacios, Paul Cawley, Rikk Hart, and Dave Bach.

When Enigma heard our demo they suggested we contact Oz. We said 'great.' He came down to our practice and show. He even brought a guitar and we had a full jamm! There was great chemistry. We're very excited to be working with Oz."

GARDIAN lists it's influences as Van Halen and Rush, and its stage influences as Kiss and others. Dave comments on secular rock, "I find a lot of secular rock is unedifying and it doesn't always benefit us as Christians. I rarely listen to secular music and then it's just to keep up with the latest sounds."

GARDIAN hopes to release the album in the fall. With songs like "Saint's Battallion," "Prisoner Zone," "Voyager," and "A World Without Love," it promises to be hot.

As for tour plans and other related themes, Dave told Pure Rock, "We plan on lots of chrome and steel on stage with a futuristic theme and we may use lasers also. We'd love to come out and rock."

After an hour-long interview, Dave stated, "It's really blessed us; all these Christian publications and people who have given us so much exposure." GARDIAN deserves it, Dave, it really does.

R E P L I E S

Dear Pure Rock,

I have just received issue number eight and I'm real impressed! I like to read about new Christian metal bands and the old ones. Without these bands I'd probably be listening to groups like Slayer or Ozzy. I thank God for these Christian rock bands and for people who put their time into writing about them--like "Pure Rock." Keep up the writing of "Heavenly Metal."

Tony Cabral  
New Bedford, MA

Thanks for your recent letter, Tony. I'm glad you like the magazine. I appreciate your support. I started Pure Rock from a burden the Lord placed on my heart to promote the numerous Christian metal and rock bands. I want to publicise them and get people to notice them, thus providing the bands' opportunity to get the Word out to as many people as possible. We should, as Christians, all have this same burden of witnessing to the unsaved. Jesus himself said that in Matthew 28:19-20. I feel the Lord has called me into this ministry to give these servants of Christ some needed press support. As long as this is the Lord's will for my life, Tony, I will keep writing about these bands. --Editor



PURE ROCK  
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HELP PURE ROCK

Dear Readers:

Due to financial troubles and a setback in our printing schedule, we've been forced to "sit down" and try to get back on our feet. You should notice that this issue is three in one. Starting this fall, Pure Rock will be published bimonthly. If this recent cutback didn't take place, we'd be forced to stop production completely. We have hundreds of dollars in bills that have to be paid on a regular basis.

Please bear with us in this troublesome time. All subscriptions have been extended to make up for the issues lost. We're trying to recover and hope concerned readers will volunteer their financial support. I'm praying that you will get involved and help keep this ministry going. We know the Lord can work a miracle with our faith in Him. We ask for your continued prayers and, if possible, a gift of money to help us out. Please enclose your gift of any amount and mail as soon as possible. Thank you.

Faithfully in Christ,

Dan Milette

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# TRUE ROCK

## NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1987 VOL. 1 NO. 10 \$1.00 U.S.A.



Les Carlsen — an exclusive interview  
with BLOODGOOD's front man  
MESSIAH PROPHET — *Plus much more!*



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PURE ROCK

AUGUST, 1987

Volume 1 Number 10

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E D I T O R I A L

# This Kid Harold

-----Dan Milette-----

I heard he had just moved from a small town in Pennsylvania. It was now the first day of my eighth year of school on a bright, warm September day. I came in five minutes before the homeroom bell rang and sat with my friends. We exchanged the customary "welcome back" speeches and discussed our schedules for the new year.

He stepped cautiously into the room. We noticed that he had greasy hair and wore big gawdy glasses. Our first impression was that this kid was a loser. We had already decided we didn't like him. I went along with everyone else--I didn't want to be known as HIS friend. We glanced at him and everyone started whispering to themselves. He limply walked to a seat in the front row over to the left corner of the room. The teacher started in on how great this year will be. Then she made a big deal of the new kid. "...and who's this cute new boy?" Half of the class started laughing.

"M-my n-n-name is Harold," he said with difficulty.

Suddenly someone shouted, "H-h-hi, H-H-Harold!" Again the class started laughing. Harold just hung his head.

The day progressed and I noticed Harold was in most of my classes. I thought to myself, "I hope he doesn't hang around me! People will think I'm his friend." After third period, I heard "hi" and noticed it was Harold. I almost said "hi" back! Instead I ignored him. I was afraid I'd get rejected for being near him. And rejection is not worth any friendship, right?

All through the day I noticed Harold was laughed at, ignored, or teased. He was humiliated, and treated like he was in the way of all the "better people" in the school.

The next day I was walking to school with my friend David and we noticed Harold was walking ahead of us. David said to me, "Hey! Watch this!" I didn't know what to say or do so I just kept walking. David ran ahead of me and Harold then stopped short. He reached out and punched Harold square in the face as he walked by. Harold landed face-down on the pavement. I had caught up to them and heard the sickening thud. David just stood over him laughing and teasing him. I stared with disbelief first at David then at Harold. I saw all the feelings of humor leave David as Harold rolled over with tears in his eyes and blood trickling out of his broken nose. He stared at David with hollow eyes. Hollow from many years of torment and rejection. Hollow from a life of abuse at home and at school. I saw David's smile disintegrate as Harold looked up into David's eyes with honest sincerity. "I-it's okay. I s-s-still like you anyway." David stared at Harold for a few seconds with disbelief then reached down and offered his hand.

I was deeply moved by this kid Harold. I turned around and started walking to school again. I thought about when I had ignored Harold the day before. I thought about how I didn't want to be seen with him. How stupid I was! This kid just displayed the ultimate act of love. He was real. Everyone else in that school just put on a show to impress their friends. Harold had no one to impress. He was real. Like no one I've ever seen.

C O N V E R S A T I O N S

## BLOODGOOD speaks straight from the heart

-----Dan Milette-----

PURE ROCK: How did you get into the music business?

LES CARLSEN: Well, I just made a choice to be in it. I went through a process of learning the business over many years. You learn to perfect your art. In my case, it was singing.

PR: When did you decide to sing?

LC: When I was five years old, I sang in chain melody for my parents. I was always into music. I became interested in singers. When I was in ninth grade I think I really made a decision right there that I wanted to be a singer, so I did everything I could to become that. I joined several bands, then just three and a half years ago on Easter, I accepted the Lord into my life.

PR: How did BLOODGOOD come into existence? What spawned it's formation?

LC: Michael Bloodgood is the one who began praying about it to begin with. He's been a Christian for fifteen years and used to work in a guitar store. He really saw a need in this heavy metal thing and began to pray about it. Before I came to the Lord, I didn't know or care that Michael was a Christian or that he was praying about it. When I did come to the Lord, I quit rock 'n roll because I was so much more in love with Jesus. But the Lord kept bringing up in my heart that there is a real need in that area. I said, "Hey, you can sing metal!" I started realizing that the Lord wanted me to do that. I thought that it was kind of crazy though. There were no Christian metal bands that I knew of at that time. I kept praying about it and asking the Lord if I was hearing Him right or if it was just me. When I answered an ad Michael put in a rock magazine for a Christian metal singer, we met and then prayed for another six months. Pretty soon, the Lord was telling me, "BLOODGOOD, BLOODGOOD, BLOODGOOD!" I called Michael up one day and said, "Hey, what's the deal? I think the Lord wants me to meet with you." Michael laughed and said, "Yeah, I've been praying about it." So we got together. I really think the Lord picked people out of the Northwest, put us together and formed BLOODGOOD as a result of Mike's prayers.





PR: BLOODGOOD has tripled in talent since your debut in early 1986. Before your new album "Detonation" was recorded, drummer J.T. Taylor was replaced by Mark Welling. Can you explain the events leading up to this? Why was there a change?

LC: J.T. had things going on in his life. He had a woman that he loved and just chose to leave. He's a good writer and a good friend. We didn't hire Mark and get rid of J.T., he just left the band.



PR: How did Mark come to know the Lord?

[Bassist Michael Bloodgood, while changing into street clothes, speaks up.

MICHAEL BLOODGOOD: Mark was a result of our ministry. After J.T. left the band, we had several shows with Stryper coming up. We kept praying for a new drummer. Finding a good heavy metal drummer who is sold out for the Lord is a very difficult thing to do! So we decided to hire a sideman that didn't have any problem with our music. When the show get's over, we'll put him in the dressing and lock the door! Mark believed he was a Christian so we said, "He'll work for now." So he started working with us. One day, he came up to us and said, "You know, I thought I was a Christian before I met you guys, but now I realize that I'm not." After we played the Stryper dates and he got a chance to meet some of the guys from the band, the Lord began wrestling with his spirit. He fought it and fought it. Finally, about a month later, he couldn't fight it anymore. He came to rehearsal with a big ear-to-ear grin on his face. We had an idea what had happened. He said, "Can we go upstairs?" So we went and prayed together, and he asked the Lord into his heart.

PR: How long after J.T. left did Mark come in?

MB: He officially joined the band in May of 1986. He started playing with us in April.

PR: How else did the band keep busy between albums?

LC: We did some dates with Stryper. Mostly we rehearsed and wrote new tunes. We spent a lot of time in prayer together and got to know each other more.

PR: Give us some specifics: when did the new album's preparation start rolling into reality? What changes and improvements were made in your eyes?

LC: Mark's style of drumming was definitely an influence. We were more prepared to go back into the studio. David, Michael and I produced the second album. We spent a month and a half in pre-production after we'd written the songs. During that time, we made many changes with the tunes. Finally, we got them to a place where we could record them and call them "masters." After that six weeks of pre-production, we recorded it. It went rather quickly because we were well rehearsed and we knew what we were going to do. We left some areas open before we went to the studio because we were going to wait for the spontaneity to happen in the studio. We were looking for that. We like to leave a little bit of freedom in our music to add to the creativity.

PR: What's the overall feeling and message you want to portray in "Detonation?"

LC: One side of the album reflects some of the things people get caught up with: suicide, prostitution, and other kinds of bondage issues. It portrays the world -- "Vagrant People" and "Self-Destruction," for example. But on the other side, it's all "The Way." It's all "The Messiah." It's all about how He loves you and how you don't have to live in that other stuff. You don't have to be like that.

PR: What are your hopes, plans, and regrets since joining BLOODGOOD? What are some of your goals?

LC: The goal is to continue to follow the Lord. As BLOODGOOD, we want to be an international success that we may take the Gospel to all of the world like the Lord said just before He went up into the clouds. So we feel that the last thing that He would say would be the one that should have the most impact. That's what we're going to do. I don't have any regrets about BLOODGOOD or being in a band. It's the best thing that's ever happened to me besides Jesus. On an artistic level, I really enjoy it. Very much.

PR: What makes BLOODGOOD different from the growing list of other Christian metal bands?

[Michael has been attentively listening to the conversation and speaks up again.]

MB: Our guitarist, David Zaffiro and I have been in the Christian music industry for a number of years. We didn't get into it because we saw a Christian heavy metal band we really liked. We've been at it and we've been around the block when it comes to being in Christian bands. It's not like a new experience for us. I think it really helped us because a lot of stuff you face as a Gospel band is pretty unusual!

PR: Finally, what impression would you like to leave on your fans?

LC: Love, togetherness, and the knowledge that there's a God in Heaven that loves them. Harmony--cut the strife. I think people that leave BLOODGOOD concerts have a good feeling. I like that. I'm glad that the Lord has used us in the way He has.

B A C K S T A G E

## Bold bands present powerful combination concert

-----Dan Milette-----

In the Spring, BLOODGOOD and MESSIAH PROPHET visited the Northeast in one concert. What an incredible concert it was! Fans got over three hours of entertainment. First performer MESSIAH PROPHET opened with the title cut from their "Rock the Flock" debut and then played for another ninety minutes.

The most obvious change was the absence of guitarist Brian Nicarry. Instead, tryout member Frank Caloiaro was in. Frank seemed out of place for the first few minutes, but then became more confident. About three quarters into the band's performance, Andy Strauss went crazy on his guitar for a ten minute solo concluding with a metal style "Amazing Grace" and a broken guitar string.

All through their performance, each member of MESSIAH PROPHET had a chance to speak. Frank Caloiaro gave his testimony and some good advice, but some of it was inaudible because he wouldn't speak directly into the microphone.

Drummer David Thunder had the audience clapping along to his command and Charlie Clark let the audience sing the chorus of "Fear No Evil." It was suprising to see the change in Andy Strauss from the photography on "Master Of The Metal." His hair was much longer than on the album cover. Looks like he's been doing some heavy hair growing! I confused him with Brian Nicarry for the first half hour of the show.

MESSIAH PROPHET was a good opener.

BLOODGOOD was the most impressive performance I've ever seen. On-stage symbolism highlighted the show. The most memorable part was when the band mesmerized the audience with theatrics of Christ's trial in the song "Crucify."

The song begins after Les Carlson steps off the stage. After the song's extended prelude, Les steps back on the stage with a Roman robe thrown over his shoulders. He is Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. The audience becomes the screaming mob, and Pilate pleads that Jesus is innocent. The solo begins as Les rips off his robe and then takes the role of Jesus. Strobe lights flash and Michael Bloodgood and David Zaffiro become the cruel Roman guards and beat Jesus.

After the song crashed to an end, Les explained more about what Jesus went through for us. He stressed that it was the "holy" leaders that had Jesus killed. He almost broke down as he explained how much Jesus loved His persecuters even when they ripped His beard out of His face. Les painfully screamed, "They beat Him, They ripped Him, They nailed Him!" He immediatley began to sing "The Messiah," the song about taking Jesus off the cross.





BLOODGOOD performed all but two songs off both of their albums. The band was extremely energetic. David Zaffiro presented an excellent guitar solo with a walk around the concert hall. Unfortunately, Mark Welling didn't offer a drum solo.

To date, however, BLOODGOOD is truly the most impressive performance the Christian metal market has to offer. If anyone has a chance to see the band in concert, don't miss the opportunity. You won't be disappointed.



R E P L I E S

Dear Dan,

I just got my first copy of Pure Rock. I really enjoyed reading it. No problem on having to reduce the number of issues. I know about financial tight spots since I've been in them a few times myself.

In your MESSIAH PROPHECY article, Andy Strauss is right about Christian metal being able to change lives--it sure changed mine. I became a Christian last October, and that was after many years of thinking that God was a "crock" and a "bunch of bull." I can't believe that I ever said those things about Him! I am with Him completely now and my life is committed to doing what He wants me to do.

You're right about BLOODGOOD's new album "Detonation." It is incredible. "The Messiah" is my favorite song on it.

Good luck in everything you do. Peace and God's love to you always.

Your sister in Christ,

Judith Okkonen  
Washington

S I D E L I N E S

----- Dan Milette -----

The following is a list of new releases:

AMY GRANT--(Untitled). A&M Records. Amy's latest album since 1985's "Unguarded" will begin pre-production in the Fall. There will be an early 1988 release.

APOSTLE--(Untitled). Label Unknown. Produced by Rez's Glenn Kaiser. Guitarist-vocalist Matt Harding claims the album is 'bone-crushing metal.' They are scripture and verse oriented. APOSTLE, out of Florida, is Mark Borrero on bass, David McKee on drums, and Matt Harding.

BARREN CROSS--Atomic Arena. Enigma Records. Drummer Steve Whitaker claims the bands second release will blow the doors off of their debut "Rock For The King." With songs like, "Terrorist Child," "Killers of the Unborn," "King of Kings," and "Fight of the Victor," this album should sell big for Enigma. BARREN CROSS' album will be distributed by Capitol Records. Look for "Arena" by early winter.

BLOODGOOD's "Detonation" will be released on Capitol Records October 1st.

DANIEL BAND--(Untitled). Refuge Records. DANIEL BAND's fifth release is expected to be out by November. As manager Neil Dellandrea says, the album will contain "some real headbanger's stuff, but also some sophisticated material." The band has just agreed to sign with Refuge for another year.

GARDIAN--Future Shock. Enigma Records. This new band features Oz Fox and Michael Sweet of Stryper as producers of their debut. Songs will include "Hyperdrive" and "Look to the Future." Look to early winter for release.

GREG X. VOLZ--(Untitled). Myrrh Records. Pre-production began in July for a September or October release. Songs include "Take Me to the End of the World" and others.

MESSIAH PROPHET--Metal Messiah. Pure Metal Records. Minus Andy Strauss and Brian Nicarry, MESSIAH PROPHET is down, but not out. It all depends on Mark Zimmerman and Frank Caloiaro, Andy and Brian's tryout replacements. Frank has been the band's Bible Study teacher for the past year. Mark is from Chicago. Brian got married recently, and his wife didn't like the idea of him playing in a heavy metal band. Andy chose to pursue a college career. The band, with two new members, plans to release their third album in November.

Metal Mania. The Pure Metal Demo-Contest album is here! Featuring over ten Christian heavy metal bands, this album contains a ballot to be mailed in by the listener. The top three bands voted will receive a Pure Metal record contract. Release date: August or September.

MICHAEL W. SMITH--(Untitled). Reunion Records. Michael plans to go to the studio this fall for a release of his fourth album in early 1988. Don't miss his live "Big Picture" tour album "The Live Set" released in July. It features twelve songs including new cuts "Nothin' but the Blood", "Emily" and "I Know."

PETRA--This Means War! Star Song Records. The second album with John Schlitt as vocalist features "Get on Your Knees and Fight Like a Man", "Kenaniah", and "All the Kings Horses." It was released August 1st.

REZ--(Untitled). Label Unknown. After a three-year break since 1985's "Between Heaven 'N Hell," REZ has planned a ninth album by early 1988. Bassist Jim Denton has left the band and was replaced by "White Noise" writer Roy Montroy.

RICK CUA--(Untitled). Sparrow Records. Presently finishing "Wear Your Colors" touring, Rick plans a trip to the studio in October to have a new one out in January or February 1988.

SAINT--Too Late For Living. Pure Metal Records. With new members Dee Harrington on guitar and drummer Dean Sanicrose from New York, SAINT plans their third in October. Bassist Richard Lynch says the material will be "apocalyptic as with 'Time's End' but will also display life as an unsaved person."

STRYPER--(Untitled). Enigma Records. The band has been finishing their "To Hell With The Devil" touring and plans to take a break in September or October for a release in January 1988.

TEMPEST--A Coming Storm. Pure Metal Records. Slated for a late August release, TEMPEST will feature "Thy Will Be Done", "Metal Mission", "In His Name" and "Stand and Fight." The band is composed of lead vocalist-guitarist Mick Rowe, bassist-vocalist J.R. Rowe, and Duane Monk on drums. The band is recruiting a new guitarist. TEMPEST will make an impact on the Christian and secular markets alike.

TRYTAN--Celestial Messenger. R.E.X. Records. Released in July, TRYTAN has Rush similarities.

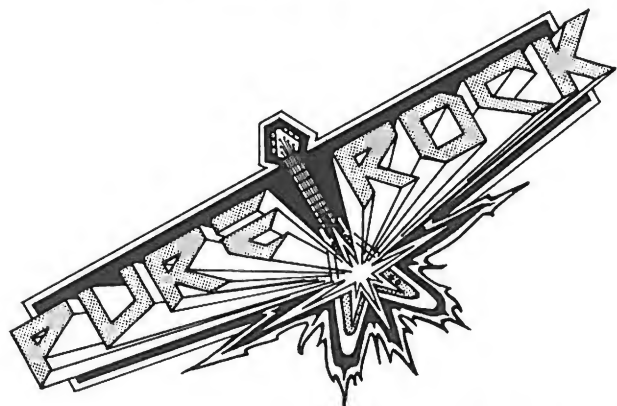
WHITE CROSS--White Cross. Pure Metal Records. Released August 1st, this new band features Ratt sounding vocals. Cuts include "Enough is Enough", "Looking for a Reason", and "There's No Way I'm Going Down."



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# The "Hart" of PETRA's ministry

----- Dan Milette -----

On the release of PETRA's new album, I spoke with Bob Hartman, the group's founder, guitarist, and lyricist. Yes, he is a one-man show! But is PETRA just a Greek word meaning "rock" or is there more depth to this award-winning Christian band? Read for yourself.

PURE ROCK: What led to PETRA's formation?

BOB HARTMAN: I started playing guitar when I was thirteen years old. I began to form bands about a year after I started playing. Since no one I knew played, I had to teach a couple guys how to.

Basically, my first band played a lot of cover tunes. It lasted all through high school and then into college. I got into another band while I was in college and we began to do some original music. That was my first experience as a band with original material. It was during that band that I became a Christian and began to write songs about the Lord. Just after I became a Christian in 1970, I was in another band called Rapture. That three-piece band was PETRA's predecessor because some of the earliest PETRA songs were done in that group. We incorporated those songs into PETRA's material. PETRA emerged in the mid-1970s.

PR: How do you write a song? What process, mood, or situation influences your writing?

BH: I tend to write things that I need to hear. You know, like preaching to yourself. That's where a lot of my ideas come from. Musically, it's a matter of drawing on different sources of your past, trying to fit the music that goes with the lyrics in such a way that it will really compliment them. I think for a Christian group, the lyrics need to be the central thing and the music needs to conform to the lyrical content. So I write from that perspective.

I usually begin with a lyrical idea and then start with the music, then add more lyrics and music until it's done. With "Shakin' the House" and "Thankful Heart," I wrote the lyrics for both songs after the music was already written. After I come up with a lyrical idea, which usually becomes the chorus of the song, I begin to write the melody and chords, and then I write the verses and the rest of the lyrics. That's the main way I write music.

PR: Even though song writing is obviously your gift and natural talent, how much effort do you have to use to compose?

BH: It is a lot of hard work. It's a craft as well as a talent. To craft a song is a hard thing to do. Sometimes it takes a long time. I will say this--with our newest release, "This Means War!", I had the shortest amount of time I've ever had to write. It ended up being very productive time, though. I wrote seven songs in three weeks. That's the most I've ever written in that amount of time. I worked about fourteen hours a day.

PR: What is the concept behind your new release?

BH: I think that the title track reveals the album's theme--all kinds of spiritual warfare. "This Means War!" is talking about the conflict between God and Satan. Satan hasn't been sentenced yet, but we know that Christ has won. "He Came, He Saw, He Conquered" goes along with that only it deals more with how Christ conquered death through the Resurrection. "Get on Your Knees and Fight Like a Man" is about how we participate as Christians in this spiritual warfare. Our weapons are not carnal but they're from God and are used to pull down the strongholds of the enemy. We do that through prayer. That is our weapon and our power. Then there's a song called "Dead Reckoning." It talks about reckoning ourselves dead unto sin but alive unto Christ.

PR: How do you expect sales to be compared with the big-seller "Beat the System"?

BH: So far, it is selling very fast. We are very happy and excited at the response to the record. The record company had great pre-sales on this record, too. Star Song and Sparrow Records have done a fantastic job of getting it into the market place. The rest is up to the public and how they like the record.

PR: What changes have taken place since Greg Volz left the band in 1985?

BH: Changes have been mainly good because I believe it was God's will. Anytime that is secure, you can only look for good things. It was a scary time at first; it was a time of definite reevaluation for PETRA to look at what we were doing and why we were doing it. We really searched in our hearts to see if we wanted to continue and if the Lord wanted us to continue. When we received that answer, being a definite "yes," the Lord opened great doors with John Schlitt. He came into the band and fit so easily. We're really excited about the response to John. The audiences have taken to John very quickly. We're happy about that--it was a major change. People are used to one sound, then another sound comes along and the people have to adjust to it. I think now, our second record with John, adjustment time is pretty well over. People have accepted the new sound of PETRA and accepted it very well. It has been very positive for us.



PR: What are some of the things that stand out in your mind the most since forming PETRA? What ways has the band changed over the years?

BH: When we first started, we were mainly an evangelistic group playing for non-Christians almost exclusively. We would set up in a park and play for people throwing frisbees. Sometimes we'd go to prisons, high schools or coffee houses. Since Contemporary Christian music has caught on with Christians, though, we've seen our audiences change to where the larger number of our audience is Christian. What we've done to accommodate that is concentrate a lot of our music and what we do in our concerts as a time of edification, exhortation, and praise. We've never lost the evangelistic side of what we do, though. In fact, we've probably refined it to where it's working even better than it did in the early days because of the amount of church support we get. We channel those converts back into churches so they can become really grounded in the Word.

PR: Do you feel that PETRA is "going with the flow" of musical styles? You started off mellow and now you're headed more toward rock/hard rock.

BH: Well, actually, we've gone through musical phases. We actually started out as rock--with two guitarists. Then we did an album called "Washes Whiter Than" which had more ballads on it. "Never Say Die" was a little like that also. Then we began to move back into more rock. "Beat the System" was more of a techno-pop rock kind of thing. We felt that was definitely too much in that direction. We wanted to return to basic rock anyway, and since John's voice was that kind of voice, the change was very easy and natural for us.

PR: How has God influenced PETRA? What proof can you offer that Jesus Christ is the ruler of your lives and not record sales and popularity?

BH: (Thoughtfully). Proof. I would say the greatest proof we could offer would be the fruit of our ministry. If we were not fruitful in what we were doing, then it would be very easy for people to doubt what was happening. We invite people to examine the fruit of what we do. Are we bringing people to Christ? Are people getting blessed through our ministry? If that is the case, then the Holy Spirit is working there.

PR: Why don't you wear stage clothes and make-up on stage? How do you feel about Christian bands that do?

BH: We don't dress too flashy on stage. Our idea is that, in every way, we want to be the same on stage as we are off stage. We want to be no less sincere with our faith when we're off stage and talking to people in homes or dealing with the garage mechanic down the street than when we are on stage. We don't want to appear that much different. Although of course, we want to wear something that's going to look right under lights. We want to look like a band, but we don't want our emphasis to be on our image and who we are as people. In our concerts, we try to turn the attention to Christ as much as we can. I know kids want to identify with a look or group. That's important, but we feel being real both on and off stage is very important.

My feeling is that some bands go farther than they need to communicate. I think that they don't give the audience enough credit. I believe that what we have to offer the world is totally different from secular groups. If we don't recognize that difference, how will they? We should offer them the fact that we have found something in our lives that we want to share. Some bands think, "Well, if we don't do this, the kids won't relate to us." I think the kids will listen more than those bands think.

Kids are looking for something to commit their lives to. You can tell by the fact that they dye their hair purple and they wear earrings in their noses and ears that they want to commit to something. When they see someone stand up and sincerely pour their heart out and talk about Jesus Christ--even if they don't immediately grasp Christianity for themselves--they get a healthy respect for a person who really believes in something and who is willing to stand up and say so. So I think some groups go farther than they need to in order to get the message across.

PR: How do you feel about Christian rock skeptics?

BH: It's nothing new to us. We've heard it from the very beginning. It did die down for a while and then it reemerged. Now it seems to be as much as ever. I think that it's a shame because it's so emotional to those people that reason tends to fly out the window. If Christians want to know about this issue, they need to think it through. They need to realize that Satan did not create any kind of music. There are different styles of music that people like. God created music and although music evolves in different forms and fashions, it's still made up of the same basic rhythms, melodies, chords, structures, harmony, and so forth. The saying where one style just happens to slip over the line and become "evil," or that Satan create "one little part over here" is just ridiculous. It's not intelligent to think that way. It's not an intelligent argument at all.

I think when we realize that God can use a lot of things we don't think He can, a lot of doors open. God is much bigger than what we think. These people are prejudiced against rock music and looking at their lives, you understand why. Jimmy Swaggart, for instance, has seen his cousins' lives slip into decadence. But I think he has blamed the music and not the lifestyle that surrounds it. It doesn't have to be that way. Music is good and not evil. To call something God created evil is just like a Pharisee calling Jesus demon-possessed. Some of Jimmy's points are valid, however. I think that we in Contemporary Christian music ought to look at some of these points and consider.

PR: What do you want your listeners' impression of the band to be?

BH: We want them to see us as not so different from themselves, as people who love the Lord and have a gift and talent to communicate that love through music.

# HEAVY METAL AT ITS BEST



*New from*



PURE METAL RECORDS



## WHITE CROSS: heavy metal with a heavy message

----- Dan Milette -----

Have you heard the latest heavy metal album from Pure Metal Records? You know, WHITE CROSS, the band with a vocalist who sounds just like Ratt's Steven Percy? The band that can't keep the records in stock at the record stores? The band that, as guitarist Rex Carroll says, is extremely straightforward in their lyrical message because "...that is all we know how to do."?

WHITE CROSS comes out of Waukegan, Illinois, home of the Cornerstone festivals. When you hear the band's album, one of the most obvious strengths of the band is Rex Carroll on guitar. Presently the group's spokesman and manager, Rex takes the humble approach. "I don't consider myself an extremely talented guitarist," he says. "I think I have about average ability." I had to force myself not to laugh at this acute understatement considering this musician has had nine years of violin lessons, ten years of guitar lessons, and five years of classical piano lessons. "I ended up with a degree in guitar performance from Northern Illinois." Just you normal, everyday, average guitarist, right? HA!

Vocalist Scott Wenzel, WHITE CROSS founder was asked how he felt about being compared with Steven Percy. He replied, "Who's he?" When I asked Rex if Scott was kidding, he said that he was being serious. "Scott grew up listening to Rez and Petra. Those were his two influences. On one hand, he's led a sheltered musical life, but on the other hand, it's cool that he's been involved in Christian music all of his life. I wish I could say that." Rex says Scott is the cause for the position WHITE CROSS is in. "Scott has a lot of spiritual maturity and is a man of great faith."

The band's album features some of the best lyrics going in Christian metal. "I don't consider myself to be a good lyricist," Rex responds. "WHITE CROSS won't receive any awards for originality, but I think we do pretty well as far as quality goes."

WHITE CROSS started pre-production on their album in October of last year. They went to the studio in late January and came out in early May. They were in the studio every weeknight and weekend. Rex was there almost full time. "I'd bring the rough mix of the rhythm track home with me from the studio from the night before and I'd play that while I'd work on my solos each morning. Then I'd teach music during the day and then go back to the studio at night. I'd go home after rehearsal and die!"

Everyone who is familiar with the album has noticed it's backmasking. Rex and WHITE CROSS have a very good reason. "If you study the album closely, you'll notice a lot of little clues. It's a game. There is one correct answer to the riddle. If you figure out all the clues that are in the album or on the cover, you win!" The band hasn't figured out what the prize will be yet.

Since the album has been released, the band's office has been getting flooded with mail. They are presently seeking a strong manager and will be doing some touring with Bloodgood in the midwest.

"From day one, my involvement with this group has been the Lord's doing," Rex admits. "The Lord has put this band together."

WHITE CROSS is a band to keep your eye on. They've got the sound that is top of the line. They're a band with a message that is like no other Christian band.

"We're just a bunch of fun guys who really love the Lord and believe that we have been called into this ministry."

# WHITE CROSS



## PETRA's newest declares war on darkness

----- Dan Milette -----

Because it was from PETRA, I listened to their new tenth album with high expectations. "This Means War!" is a winner.

The most impressive part of PETRA's latest is how powerful and detailed the lyrics are. Great job, Bob Hartman.

Each song is a part of the album's main theme. This theme is summed up by a statement in PETRA's press release:

"'This Means War!' is a plea from PETRA for teens to strengthen their armor, ready themselves for battle, and face the spiritual warfare being waged around them."

This is the second PETRA album produced by Dino and John Elefante who also contributed to the writing of two songs on the album.

PETRA's unique sound is constructed from John Lawry's powerful keyboards and upfront guitar by Bob Hartman. John Schlitt, his second album as the band's vocalist, uses a raspy, angry voice that makes the title cut very suitable as a "call to battle." Louie Weaver holds everything together on drums and bassist Mark Kelley completes the PETRA rhythm section.

Included on "This Means War!" are "All the King's Horses," a song about the Second Coming of Jesus; and the title cut, about Satan's fall from Heaven and the Christian's command to resist temptation. Other great cuts include "The Water is Alive," "He Came, He Saw, He Conquered," "Get on Your Knees and Fight Like a Man," and "Kenaniah"--a song about a Levite in the Biblical days. Two ballads are also included, "Don't Let Your Heart Be Hardened" and "I Am Available."

"This Means War!" proves that PETRA has succeeded in a very commendable effort. This album is not to be taken lightly. It's a truth that should be taken seriously. This is not just another Christian rock album. It's a declaration of war!

### RATING SYSTEM:

\*\*\*\*\* - Outstanding  
\*\*\*\* - Excellent  
\*\*\* - Good  
\*\* - Fair  
\* - Poor

PETRA--This Means War!  
Star Song Records

\*\*\*\*1/2 (Out of 5)



# TRYTAN: messengers of the Word

----- David Terpeny -----

I must admit I had my doubts when I first received an assignment for a TRYTAN interview. "Just another band," I thought. Was I wrong! All former misgivings were erased after speaking to them and hearing their album "Celestial Messenger." This band is serious about their message and the hard rock medium they use to spread it.

The band hails from Chicago and consists of Steve Robinson playing lightning fast, mind boggling bass as well as keyboards, Lary Dean on lead guitar and lead vocals, and Scotty Blackman providing a steady background on drums as well as vocals for the song "Chains," one that he wrote.

Recently, PURE ROCK spoke to Scotty about TRYTAN, it's seven-year history, and it's plans for the future. "The existence of TRYTAN as a band is because of Lary," Scott told us. "He had a vision of what he wanted in a band and started the ball rolling." According to Scott, it was just like the formation of any other band. "Three guys shared the same idea and got together. It's as simple as that. Over the seven years, after many member changes, I think this trio finally fits. We're all very excited about it."

Excited they should be. As mentioned earlier, they have released an album--TRYTAN's first--and should be touring as this is being read. Scott highlighted various parts of the album. "Again, the idea was Lary's. He literally dreamed it up one night. It's hard to describe without actually hearing it so I guess I'll wait until you go out and buy the album!" Some of the songs on the album are "Mr. Electric," a very unique depiction of Jesus, "Gettin' Ready," a Christian rock anthem, the tentative first single "Don't Turn Away," and "It's War."

The release of the album has fueled the critics' fire that they are Rush clones, an accusation Scott and the band have their own opinions on. Scott opposes the Rush similarities, such as Lary's high-pitched voice reminiscent of Geddy's. "We are not Rush clones," he said forcefully. "You do not hear grinding, wailing guitars on a Rush album. Maybe Motley Crue, but not Rush. We've managed to combine the two sounds into a kind of 'techno-metal.' We're very pleased with that TRYTAN sound."

TRYTAN's music and message are direct and their aim is to spread it to teens as much as possible. "We see ourselves as messengers of God's Word. We want to display who God really is at our shows. 'He's everything around you,' we tell them, 'the planets, every blade of grass and tree. He created and gave it all to you. You don't need the world's quick fix. God gives you eternal satisfaction.'"

Scotty knows first hand the effect of TRYTAN's message. He became a Christian only three years ago. He explains, "When I joined TRYTAN, I really didn't have much of a spiritual life. I'm only twenty-six and I went through the same pressures and problems that they went through. Over a period of time, Lary coached me with the Bible and told me I had to straighten things out with God. I saw his dedication to it through his work with the band, so I listened. I began praying for months and eventually straightened things out with Jesus and then felt like a new man."

"God can change your life. I know that from experience, so let TRYTAN introduce you to Him. That's all we're here to do."

# TRISTAN



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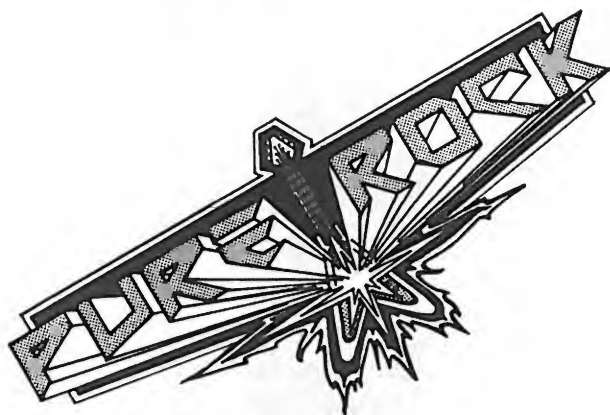


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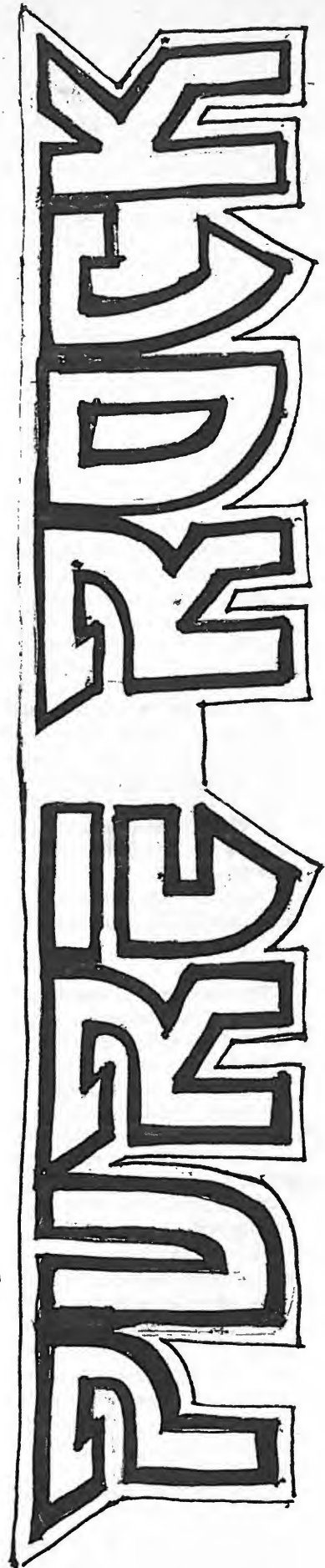
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Albums purchased in the last year:  
☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ over 15

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# EDITORIAL

## A Plea For A Soul

By Dan Milette

*10/87*

"It boils down to one question," I desperately asked you that night, "are you willing to accept eternal life?"

"Well, I'm just not ready yet, Dan."

I couldn't believe my ears. Here I was listening to you, someone I had grown to love so much, refuse a soul-saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

God's spirit had been moving within me. I started sobbing as I replied, "If you ever need to talk or pray with me, please remember that I am here." I couldn't bear the pain of watching you throw your life away like an empty container.

*1/3 page*  
*20*

"Lord," I prayed late that night, "please convict him and reveal how personal and genuine You really are. Show him how much You love him. Use me to bring him to You, Jesus." I couldn't stop crying. The Lord had placed the heaviest burden I'd ever had for a person's soul on my heart for you.

I met you for the very first time only two and a half months earlier. Here I was five weeks later sobbing for your soul.

You grew up with Christian parents and knew all about Christianity and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. But you decided to remain distant. "I've got a lot of problems," you said. I reminded you that God is not too small to handle your problems and that you don't have to fix your life up to come to the Lord. You have to give your life to Jesus and ask Him to take care of the rest.

Before you and I separated the next afternoon, I said that I really loved you and reminded you that I'll be there if you ever needed someone to talk to. I hugged you goodbye and felt like I left my heart where we stood. It would be a long time before I'd see you again.

The Lord placed you in my life for a reason I couldn't seem to completely understand. "What is it, Lord," I asked Jesus the night you left. I went into the bathroom to splash water in my face. I was crying so hard, I had to sit down. I couldn't get you off of my mind. I knelt down right there. "Lord, you've placed this crushing burden on my heart and I've listened to Your voice, now please bear my burden. Your Word says You will. I've done everything I can possibly do. I commit this into Your hands."

The Lord taught me many things through this experience. It was emotionally exhausting, but I trusted God's guiding hand. I know inside that someday your eyes will be opened and you'll decide to trust in Jesus. All I can do is take that by faith.

Please hear me. Jesus has something special to accomplish in your life. Don't listen to the devil when he tells you to put off a commitment to the Lord. He'll tell you that you're young and have plenty of time, but you don't know how much time you have on this earth. No one knows.

Don't let the things of this world distract you from the pleading arms of the Savior. He loves you. He cares for you. He died for you. Nothing that this world offers can compare with the peace of a right heart before the Lord. Trust Him. He'll take the life you surrender to Him and make it more than you ever thought it could be.

I love you. Never forget that. But Jesus loves you much more than you or I could ever imagine. Let Him prove His love for you. Just let Him in to where you are.



## Ministry on the frontline

group photo

The scene is set. Somewhere in Southern California, three men are sitting in a coffee shop with their elbows on the table. Expressions of concern are clearly visible on each face. Suddenly, one of the three breaks the silence.

"Guys, we've got to be bolder in our lyrics! We can't walk the fence anymore!"

Drop Cap The discussion continued between the three-man hard rock band IDLE CURE and the results materialized on their latest effort **Tough Love** on Frontline Records. Vocalist Steve Shannon unveiled the reasoning behind the urgent decision to change their writing style. What brought the band to this level of lyrical maturity?

"Within the last year, we completely reassessed our commitment to both our music ministry and serving God," Steve explains. "That started with a trip we made to Europe in December of 1987. We saw the impact of our music on Europe." But Europe has yet to see the impact it made on IDLE CURE.

"The Christianity we saw in Europe was child-like, enthusiastic and growing," continues Steve. "It filled us with the Spirit. We came back a different band."

When they began writing music for their sophomore release **Tough Love** immediately after the trip, they dealt with the temptation of being lyrically generic. "We can't do it! We're in a music ministry and we've dedicated our music to the Lord, so let's stop the crossover stuff, state our claim and go from there."

The song *Frontline*, written by guitarist Mark Ambrose, recently the number one Christian rock song in the country, and *So Many Faces*, written by Steve, were both inspired by the band's experience in Europe. "Everything just seemed to be more dedicated from that point on," Steve notes.

Drop Cap IDLE CURE's history goes back eight or nine years ago, just after Steve and his girlfriend, who later became his wife, got saved. "I met Mark back then. He had been a Christian for some time and was looking for a singer. We connected immediately and right then, we recognized where we were at and began committing our music to the Lord."

Soon afterward, things began to happen. They formed the band — originally called Sojourn — and received only limited success. Through that band, however, they were introduced to Pete Lomakin, IDLE CURE's keyboardist, and recorded a demo tape that was sent to Frontline Records, which eventually led to their record deal and name change.

Amazingly, the individual members have large contrasts in playing and songwriting styles — from rhythm-and-blues to jazz. "It's unique that we were able to come together and blend so well into a unified style," remarks Steve. "The net result is something that's pretty unique."

Through all the band's experiences, they've grown together and their unity and focus has become stronger. "This commitment and dedication indicates that we're growing more branches. The 'tree' of IDLE CURE is bearing more fruit and God is blessing."

By Dan Milette

Pull Quote  
~~Take Out~~

border tape

“

**There's that temptation to be generic. A love song to Jesus could also be a love song to a girl... We've dedicated our music to the Lord, so no more crossover stuff. Let's state our claim and go from there.**

”

— Steve Shannon  
IDLE CURE

border tape

Even with their music ministry rapidly approaching full-time, each member in the band still has full-time non-music-related jobs. Steve manages an art gallery, Mark is a real estate appraiser and Pete is a plumbing contractor. "Right now," Steve says, "both the increased demands on the band and our own hearts are dictating that we need to make some serious adjustments in the next few months."

Steve says that he wants IDLE CURE's fans to have the impression that the band is energetic, honest, and that they can know and understand the band through honest spiritual communication. "I sit up at night and praise God for what He's done for me," he admits. "I can't think of anything else to do. I pray that I'm in God's Will and that I continue to make the right decisions. The fact that God has given me a music ministry is all that I could have ever wanted." ○

1/2 pg  
Ad

# Traveling the hard road

**By Dan Milette**

"It's a long, hard road. A lot of changes come. Hard changes come."

That statement, found on the intro of *I Still Believe* from RUSS TAFF's latest album, describes how the soloist's self-titled third release on Myrrh Records developed.

"...self examination. I was looking at my relationship with God, my parents and with American Christianity," Russ said. "Was I following God or just a pattern that other people laid out for me when I was young? I was dealing with a lot of struggles and pain in my own life."

After recording the album, Russ experienced a sense of personal satisfaction knowing that he was able to do a record that he really wanted to. It didn't meet everyone's expectations at Myrrh but it was one of those albums he needed to do for himself. "The record company understood and was very supportive. On a personal level, I'm very pleased with it."

Featuring emotionally and spiritually motivated songs like *Believe In Love*, *Walk Between the Lines*, and *Healing Touch*, the album became an artistic tool that Russ used to get his views across with. "I want to share my experiences, strengths and hopes to people," he stated. "I like thought-provoking songs that make me examine my relationship with God and help me to focus on things that are good for me."

Russ claimed he's a Christian today because of the reality that he needs the "loving God who gets involved and takes us beyond the human strength that we grow up relying on."

"I love to share that with people."

“

**I reached a point where I had to make a decision: am I going to walk away, be a backseat believer and follow the desires of my body, or am I going to follow God?**

”



What about the earlier years? Russ said he had to handle some of the same pressures teens face today. "I wanted to be a Christian but I also wanted to fit in with my friends," he admitted. "They had started drinking and their sexual lives became active—and I struggled."

Russ found himself battling his own self-will. It was difficult. Yet he looked up in the midst of the conflict. He reached the point in his life where he actually had to walk away from his friends in the decision to follow the Lord or follow his own desires.

Things stayed difficult, though, even after the installment of his renewed commitment. "That year was a very lonely year for me in school and I spent time alone."

The Lord rewarded Russ' faithfulness, however, because the next year he found Christian friends who he found strength and support in. Russ explained that he and his Christian friends would meet several times a week before school started just to encourage and pray together.

Russ likes the style of music he performs. "The more I mature as an artist, the more I'm becoming honest with myself. There's got to be that emotion that comes when a person truly believes what he's singing or writing." He continued, "It's important to write tunes that are to the point and self explanatory. When you hear one, you know what's being talked about; you identify with what the singer or songwriter is saying."

After learning so much in a short time, Russ and the crew are busy working on his fourth album. Even though there's a long way still to go, they've got a lot of new material written. He feels this time he's on surer ground with who he is and what he feels God wants him to do. The new album will be "basic and simpler musically."

Off the road and out of the studio, RUSS TAFF's real world is home. "I don't wake up in the morning and have thousands of people applauding," he laughs. "I mean, I've got to carry my dirty clothes downstairs so I can wash them!"

When thousands of people respond in tours and sales, Russ agreed it feels great, but that is just a part of his life. "It's not my main focus."

Considering life's hardships and rewards, Russ closed the interview with a plea to young Christians: "Make sure your relationship with Jesus is *your* relationship with Jesus. It can't belong to someone else. He's your personal Savior and your personal God. When uncomfortable situations arrive and your boat is rocked, you have your Creator God to keep you on an even keel and keep peace in your heart." ○

Keep up the good work you guys are doing and thanks for publishing a *real* music magazine about metal with meaning and God's love!

**Bobbie Arceneaux, Jr.**  
**Galveston, TX**

I'm very interested to hear about Pure Rock Magazine. It would be keen to subscribe to Pure Rock as I need to be kept informed about the U.S.A. scene. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

**Tony May**  
**Plymouth, England**

Your magazine is exactly what I've been looking for. I will be very pleased if my next issue of your magazine reaches my house as rapidly as possible!

**Mike Hornyak**  
**Oakland, MD**

I am a "born-again metalhead" that loves to rock for Christ. I want to find out about as many Christian bands as I can and your magazine has been a good way to do that.

**Gary Westmoreland**  
**San Jose, CA**

I think it's great what you are doing with Pure Rock. Keep up the good work.

**David Williams**  
**Wenham, MA**

Thanx a lot for Pure Rock. I can tell you that God is moving here in France. Workers are few but the Lord is on our side. God bless Pure Rock!

**Daniel Baillod**  
**Prayssas, France**

Just wanted to write and tell you how impressed I am with Pure Rock. Your editorial "This Kid Harold" (Vol. 1 No. 10) really touched me. Harold really was a good example of Jesus' love. Keep up the outstanding work and always give glory to God for your abilities. You can't go wrong!

**J.R. Rowe**  
**TEMPEST**

**Oakland City, IN**

I just received a copy of Pure Rock from a friend and I *love it!* It's great! I would like to start receiving copies of this magazine immediately! I am the manager of a secular record store and promote Christian rock and heavy metal a lot. Your magazine will really be a blessing to me and my customers.

**Kim Thibodeaux**  
**Lafayette, LA**

I am very excited to subscribe to your magazine and I eagerly await my next issue. Thank you for your ministry and rock on for God.

**Eric Wodka**  
**Miami, FL**

# Magazine publisher gives God the credit

But this high school senior still works hard on 'Pure Rock' out of his bedroom office

By Phil Vander Kamp

Dan Millette is in debt.

It was the four-color logo that put the screws to him money-wise. He had it designed specially for his Christian heavy metal music magazine.

It looked wicked cool, the words "Pure Rock" blasting from the center of a flying-V electric guitar, so he had 10,000 magazine covers printed for future issues. It cost plenty, and now he has to pay his printer \$540 before he'll print the next issue.

Millette figures he won't have that kind of money together until next March, so production of Pure Rock has been suspended until then.

But no matter. If it happens and the magazine is a success — great. If not, well, it's God's will.

"Pure Rock" is a Christian rock, hard rock and heavy metal music magazine. Millette is the publisher, editor, writer and chief bottle washer. From his bedroom, he has published 11 issues of the magazine. And each cover is proudly displayed on his bedroom wall.

Millette is a busy guy. He's in his senior year at Ipswich High School and works 24 hours a week as a cashier at Cape Ann Market. About 10 hours a week are tied up in church activities — he attends the Beverly Church of the Nazarene. After that, he works on the magazine. In spite of all that, he still made the honor roll at school.

He earns about \$100 dollars a week at Cape Ann. Of that, \$50 goes to paying the printer, the rest is split between paying room and board, saving for a boom box, and his weekly tithing to his church. That doesn't leave much to publish a magazine.

## The Lord's will

"I'm not claiming any credit for what I've done. It's not my idea. It was the Lord who inspired me," Millette says.

Pure Rock magazine is the Lord's will, Millette is just doing the foot work, he says. He gives God all the



**Pointing the way** he hopes the future of his Christian rock music magazine will go. Dan Millette stands in front of covers of past editions in his combination bedroom/office at his home on High Street.

(Photo by Phil Vander Kamp)

credit for any success the magazine achieves. Millette says God has "blessed it every step of the way."

Until he had to suspend publication, it was printed bi-monthly. Now his subscriptions are for six issues

off, becoming a nationally distributed publication, with himself sitting in a big office with his Pure Rock logo in neon lights over his head, directing a staff of hundreds. Right now, he's content working from an old metal desk in his attic bedroom of his mother's house on High Street, three doors down from the Donut Express.

From his office set up in a corner of his bedroom, Millette interviews Christian rock bands and writes editorials about Christian ethics and morals. On his desk, leaning against the wall, is a framed picture of Jesus. It reminds him of why he's making the magazine.

The bands play heavy metal music. The members are dressed in black leather and chains, pounding out chords on screaming electric guitars in a cloud of machine-made smoke. But instead of names like "Twisted Sister" and "Mötley Crüe", the Christian bands have names like "Saints" and "White Cross". The bands are witnessing for Jesus through the medium of heavy metal music.

Millette says he's doing his part for Jesus by promoting the bands. He's hoping to help build an audience for the bands who are spreading the word of God.

## In the beginning

Like most businesses, his had a meager beginning. Fooling around with one of the new electric typewriters at the high school, last September, he came up with the title and off the top of his head he wrote some complimentary remarks about a couple of Christian bands he listened to. He liked what he saw and made 30 copies of what he had written with his church's copy machine. He passed them out at a church retreat and told the people there he'd send them a year's subscription for a dollar. Six people took him up on it.

That was enough to keep him going. For the next issue he made 50 copies, and the next 60, and then 100, and then 200. And then the

church told him he better find himself a printer if he wanted to continue.

But the church didn't desert him. A fellow church member, Gene Hebert, of Essex Office, Inc. in Beverly, agreed to print his magazine for cost. Millette says he gets additional help from church members to do proofreading and typing.

"I looked around and realized that everyone I needed to help was right in my church," he said.

He's operating with as small a budget as he can. He types up each issue on his uncle's personal computer. To review the complimentary tapes he gets from record companies, he hears them on a borrowed boom box. A friend at the high school lends him a camera to take pictures for the cover.

From a two-page Xerox reproduced on his church's copier, Pure Rock has grown to the 2,500 copies he had printed for the November issue.

He's still got 300 of them in his closet and the band "Petra", which was featured in the issue, took 2,000 copies with it to sell at its gigs.

## Select audience

Millette knows it's a select audience that is interested in Christian rock music, but he believes there is the possibility for growth. He's always "blown away" when he gets a letter from a stranger subscribing to the magazine or contributing money to help keep it going.

He said he's received \$180 in voluntary contributions. He's also heard from people as far away as New Zealand, Norway, and Belgium who either want to subscribe to the magazine or learn more about it.

His subscriptions come mainly through contact with the bands who distribute the magazine at their concerts. The bands and the record labels producing Christian music are his advertisers.